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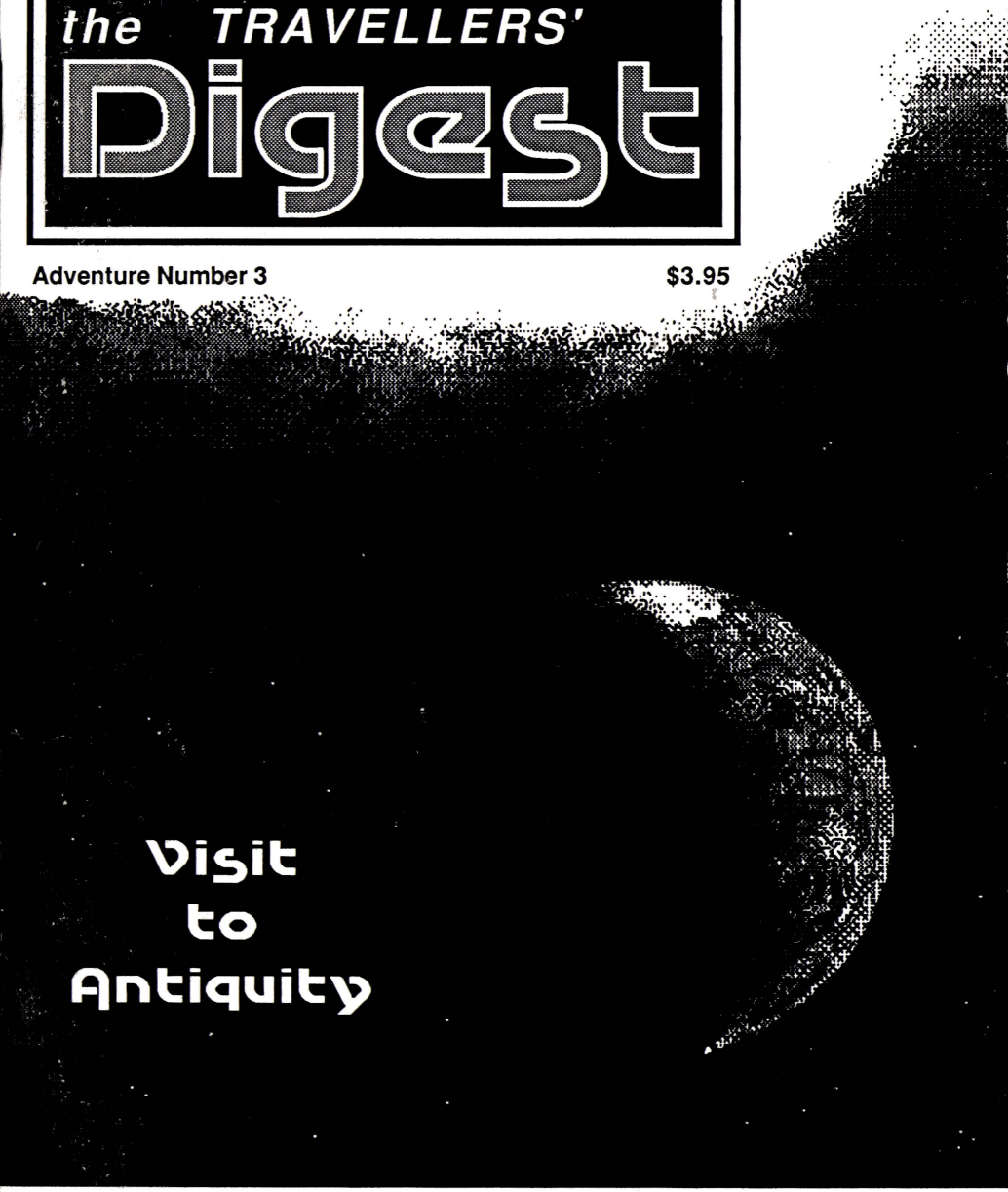
the TRAVELLERS' Digest

Adventure Number 3 **$3.95**



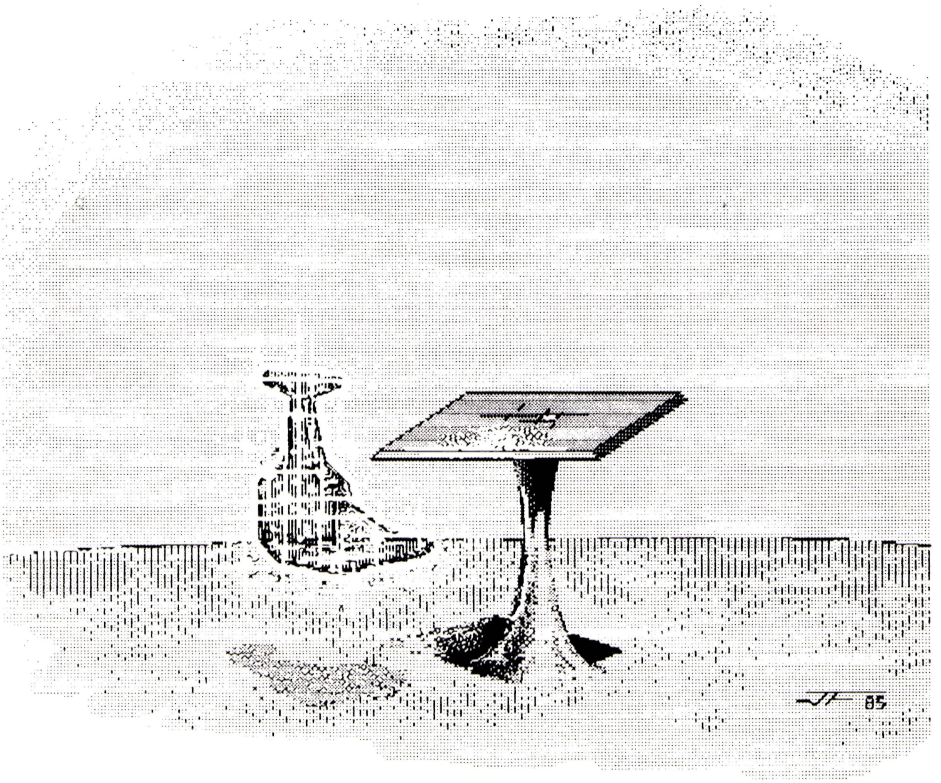
Visit to Antiquity

The quarterly adventure magazine devoted to GDW's Game of the Far Future, ***Traveller***®

Digest Group Publications

Visit to Antiquity

FEATURE ADVENTURE



...the world Antiquity abounds with wonders of the past age; the great age when the mysterious super-race known as the Ancients roamed the galaxy...

– Akidda Laagiir, 1101, from ' On Antiquity ' in the Travellers' Digest

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Editors' Digest

We begin this issue with some bad news for the Zhodani Consulate: despite what we printed last time, there is no discount currently being offered on warbots. Some of you may have noticed that we forgot to multiply the price of the 'bot by 1.5 for its special circuit protection. The correct price for a Zhodani warbot should have been listed as 305,085 Cr.

Another announcement may be of interest to Travellers in the Solomani Rim area. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend ORIGINS 86 in Los Angeles on July 3-6. We'll be there in full force, with a booth right next to Game Designers' Workshop.

At ORIGINS you'll have the opportunity to meet a lot of the "big names" in the world of gaming. You can attend seminars and play in tournaments. And you can see the latest materials available for your favorite game. At the upcoming ORIGINS we will put on two free seminars: a detailed look at the Gvegh (Vargr) language and culture, for those of you who just couldn't get enough from this issue's article, and a seminar to tell you how to write for gaming publications and how to get your material published.

Best of all, you can see our new **Traveller** products at ORIGINS 86. Naturally, we will be bringing Issue 5 of *The Travellers' Digest*, just out June 1. The issue will celebrate our first anniversary, as the characters reach Vland. You won't want to miss it. We'll also be bringing another all-new Traveller product that we'll tell you about next issue.

You may notice our new look this quarter, and we'd like to hear how you like it. Our circulation has grown to the point where we can justify the extra expense of typeset-quality text. There are a few other changes in format which may be less noticeable, as we emphasize that every issue contains a complete adventure. A fully-detailed Traveller adventure for only $3.95 is a real bargain. (And if you subscribe, you save even more.) We're also highlighting the way each issue's articles embellish and amplify on certain aspects of the adventure.

We get a lot of mail from readers, and from time to time we'd like to share some of it with you. One letter we got last month asked how we come up with the technical information for planets. We do what we thought all Traveller players do: just use the tables and formulas found in Book 6, *Scouts* (put out by Game Designers' Workshop). It turned out that our reader had never heard of Book 6 before, and the simple reason for this was that his dealer didn't stock it.

If you want to see more Traveller materials, let your favorite game store owner know. Dealers are more than happy to stock products you're interested in, but many have forgotten that there are 400,000 Traveller players worldwide. While you're shopping, you might check to see whether your dealer carries *The Travellers' Digest*. If he doesn't, it's probably because he doesn't know you read it each quarter.

Ever since the psionics suppressions, fewer and fewer game store owners are able to read minds. If there are new things you haven't seen, or old things you still don't have, the best way to get them is to let your dealer know you want them.

Visit to Antiquity

FEATURE ADVENTURE

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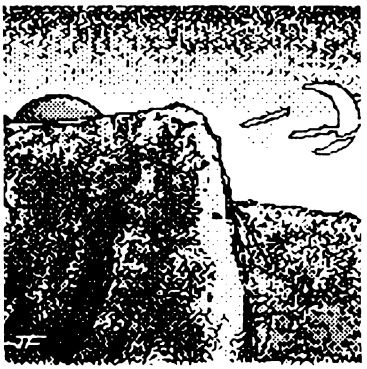
– Akidda Laagiir, 1101, from 'On Antiquity' in the Travellers' Digest

INTRODUCTION



Visit to Antiquity tells of a *Travellers' Digest* reporter and his companions as they travel to Antiquity/Ian and encounter alien scientists who have discovered an amazing Ancient artifact.

It is assumed that this adventure will be administered by a referee who has read through it, and who is familiar with both this adventure and the rules for **Traveller**. The basic **Traveller** rules are all that is required. Paper, pencils, six-sided dice, and square-grid graph paper are needed, and a calculator is helpful.

Optional References: Additional helpful information may be found in:

- Adventure 12, *Secret of the Ancients*
- Alien Module 3, *Vargr*
- Alien Module 5, *Droyne*
- Supplement 8, *Library Data (A-M)*
- Supplement 11, *Library Data (N-Z)*
- *The Atlas of the Imperium*

The only background information required for this adventure is contained in this issue of *The Travellers' Digest*..

Chapters: This adventure is in several chapters, most of which are material to be read only by the referee.

This introduction may be read by both the players and the referee.

The chapter *"Tourist Trap"* introduces the characters and the situation. This section is designed to be read to the players in order to acquaint them with the characters and their personalities.

The data in *Antiquity/Ian* can be given to the players directly.

The chapter *"Playing the Characters"* contains useful insights for role-playing. The players should read this chapter before they start the game.

The rest of the adventure is for the referee only; players may discover its secrets only by playing the adventure.

STANDARDS AND ASSUMPTIONS

This adventure takes place in the universe published and described by a multitude of **Traveller** products.

The Imperium is a huge human-dominated stellar empire thirty centuries in the future. It encompasses several hundred light-years of our segment of the Milky Way galaxy.

The Corridor Sector is a 32 by 40 parsec (1 parsec = 3.26 light-years) area of the Imperium near the Imperial frontier. A sector is divided into sixteen administrative areas called subsectors. Each subsector is 8 by 10 parsecs in size.

A world is commonly listed with its name followed by a slash and the name of its subsector location. For example, Antiquity/Ian refers to the world *Antiquity* in the *Ian* subsector.

Dates: All dates herein correspond to the Imperial calendar. The starting date of this adventure is 086-1101.

Place: This adventure takes place on the world Antiquity/Ian (subsector E of the Corridor Sector).

The Universal Task Profile: In all our adventures we use the Universal Task Profile or **UTP**, which provides the referee and players with all the information they need about a task to be performed. Using the UTP they can quickly roll for a task attempt and know which skills or character attributes are useful, how long the task takes, and whether more than one attempt is possible.

We encourage the referee and players to make liberal use of the UTP as a simple, playable framework for defining and attempting tasks.

Here are some hints on defining a task with the UTP format:

• the more specific the task situation, the more effective the UTP definition becomes. Using a single UTP to cover a wide range of related tasks strains believability and makes the UTP ludicrous. For example, to say that one UTP to detect lying would always apply is unrealistic.

• when assigning a task difficulty level, base it on how difficult the task would be for an individual with level-0 in the required skill. Don't use an unskilled individual as the basis or the task may be strangely difficult for a skilled character. Similarly, don't use a skilled (level-1 or more) character as the basis, or the task might be much easier than it should be.

UTP examples...

to repair Aybee when dex damage is less than 8–
(ROUTINE, mechanical, dex, REPEATABLE, 10 min)

to bribe a local customs official on Regina–
(DIFFICULT, bribery, int, NON-REPEATABLE, INSTANT)

to determine that Aybee is a robot–
(DIFFICULT, max(medical, interview), min(int,edu), REFEREE)
REFEREE: roll once in first hour & every four hours thereafter when at close range.

to locate protected information in a Tukera Lines ship computer–
(FORMIDABLE, computer, int, REPEATABLE, 5 min)

Universal Task Profile (UTP)

The elements are:
(DIFFICULTY, primary skill,primary characteristic, REPEATABILITY, TIME INCREMENT)

Difficulty
difficulty levels (roll 2D to succeed; a modified roll of 2 or less fails—a natural roll of 2 *always* fails):

SIMPLE	3+	primary skill: add skill level as a DM.
ROUTINE	7+	• DM for no skill is -5.
DIFFICULT	11+	• JOT skill and min(int,edu) ÷ 5 reduce a -DM
FORMIDABLE	15+	• at the referee's option, skills related to primary skill can be treated as level-0 in the primary skill.
		primary characteristic: divide by 5 (drop fractions) and use as +DM.

Repeatability
A task is either:
NON-REPEATABLE (one try only) or REPEATABLE (additional tries allowed)

- additional tries can generally take place immediately.
- additional tries depend on a successful dedication roll, which has the following UTP:
  (DIFFICULT, no skill, SUM(end,int), REFEREE)
  REFEREE: character must roll before each additional task attempt, after failing at the task.
- if the character fails dedication roll, increase task difficulty for next attempt. JOT skill can "save" difficulty increase at a rate of 1 save per JOT skill level.
- if the character waits 1D days, he can retry task (if sucessful at dedication roll) with no increase in difficulty. If he fails *any* dedication roll now, he has completely given up on task and may not retry (JOT saves still apply, however).

Duration
A task is either:
INSTANT or a specific TIME INCREMENT (task takes 3D time increments, average of 10)

- if successful at the task, apply a -DM of the amount over required success roll.

Notes: Occasionally a task may require special instructions. These tasks will say REFEREE in place of one or more UTP elements. A brief paragraph of special instructions labeled REFEREE will follow the UTP.

These special functions are sometimes used in the UTP:

sum(item,item...)	sum of two or more items
avg(item,item...)	average of two or more items
max(item,item...)	maximum of two or more items
min(item,item...)	minimum of two or more items
all(item)	characters may combine their values in the item

CHARACTERS

This adventure is intended for the characters listed. Feel free to change any or all of the genders as desired. Additional background information for these characters can be found in other issues of *The Travellers' Digest.*

Akidda Laagiir, journalist 858AAB Age 42 6 terms Cr 28,000
Born: 319-1058 on Mora/Mora
Interview-5, Streetwise-3, Grav Vehicle-1, Wheeled Vehicle-1, Admin-1, Brawling-1 Possessions: TL 15 Holocrystal Recorder

Position: Current recipient of the *Travellers' Digest* Touring Award.

Akidda Laagiir started at the age of eighteen as a copy boy with the *Mora World Review* ; his friendly face and his ability to get people to trust him contributed to his steady career progress. Living on Mora, with its charismatic dictator, the Duchess Delphine the Matriarch, is sometimes a trying experience for any journalist, which may explain his occasionally iconoclastic actions. He is slightly prejudiced against "the system", preferring fresh ideas and fresh ways of doing things.

His admin skill was learned while moving up the ranks, but it is a skill that he would just as soon not need: he much prefers cutting through to the heart of a situation. While he is sensitive to the needs of others, he has a well developed self-preservation instinct that allows him to quickly adapt to strange locales and cultures—a skill that has saved his neck many times.

Akidda's most prominent skill is his interviewing ability. By his knowledge of psychology, body language, and oral communication, he has a good chance of discerning someone's feelings and drawing him out.

Akidda Laagiir received the *Travellers' Digest* Touring Award for his article on the role of the spinward frontier sectors in shaping the growth of the Imperium in the next 1000 years.

Dur Telemon, ex-scout B7A85B Age 33 3 terms Cr 65,000
Born: 038-1067 on Mora/Mora
Auto Pistol-3, Survival-2, Pilot-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Engineer-1, Gambling-1, Brawling-1 Possessions: Auto Pistol

Dur Telemon was *born* into the Scout service. His father was in the Scout service while Dur was growing up, and both of his grandfathers served in the Scouts in their younger days. Dur enjoyed nothing more as a boy than to sit and listen to their tales of adventure. The Fourth Frontier War broke out when Dur was a teenager—his father's service in the war was a source of pride for the entire family.

Dur's individualistic nature meshed well with his duties in the Exploration Office of the Scout Service. In his first term, a "routine" mapping expedition on Pannet/Rhylanor suddenly turned into a hostage rescue operation, and it was then that Dur happened to save Dr. Krenstein's life.

The harsh conditions Dur often encountered taught him much about staying alive and living off the land in exotic environments.

Dur has resigned from the Scouts and is travelling with his uncle, Akidda Laagiir.

Dr. Theodor Krenstein, scientist 495FCB Age 58 10 terms Cr 300,000
Born: 173-1042 on Rhylanor/Rhylanor
Computer-4, Leader-3, JOT-2, Laser Rifle-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Electronics-1, Medical-1, Mechanical-1
Possessions: Hand Computer (TL15), Electronic Tool Kit, Robot AB-101

Position: Graz Redniz Chair of Computational Robotics at Rhylanor Institute of Technology on Rhylanor/Rhylanor (on sabbatical leave).

Dr. Theodor Krenstein is a gifted, multi-talented scientist, with interests ranging from anthropology and archaeology to xenology and zoology, including most of the "ologies" in between. He holds advanced degrees in computer science and robotics.

After three terms as Dean of the School of Robotic Science at the Rhylanor Institute of Technology, he was appointed to the Graz Redniz Chair of Computational Robotics, a prestigious and coveted position. He has to his credit 12 books, over 100 articles in technical and scientific journals, and holds more than 250 Imperial patents for his inventions and computer work. Despite this, he has become bored with academic life, and realizing his age, he has taken an extended sabbatical in order to make forays into other parts of the Imperium.

During a test of Scout survey robots in 1090 on Pannet/Rhylanor, members of a disgruntled anti-technist group kidnapped Dr. Krenstein and threatened to kill him if the Scout service didn't meet their demands. A young scout named Dur Telemon was part of the all-volunteer raiding team that finally freed Dr. Krenstein; in fact, Dur was the first to reach the Doctor.

In the following year, Dr. Krenstein constructed his personal servant and bodyguard, AB-101.

For more information, see this issue's "Playing the Characters".

Aybee Wan Owen, valet FD9C7B Age 19(?) 0 terms Cr 0
Constructed: 1091 on Rhylanor/Rhylanor
Medic-1, Linguist-1, Vehicle-1, Laser Welder-1

Position: Personal servant and protégé of Dr. Theodor Krenstein.

AB-101, affectionately known as "Aybee", is a pseudo-biological robot designed and constructed by Dr. Krenstein. His UPP, skill levels, and other personal data are approximations, calculated by comparing human norms with Aybee's abilities.

Although his programming gives him certain basic abilities, because of his lack of true artificial intelligence he can make errors in judgment; in abstract situations, this effectively lowers his true skill level.

Aybee's "weapon" is a light laser welder, built into his right arm. Dr. Krenstein has designed Aybee in such a way that his arm (ostensibly used only as a tool) can pass inspection by officials, since laser welders are not restricted by local law levels; however, voice override controls allow Dr. Krenstein to use Aybee as a weapon at short range.

Because Dr. Krenstein ordinarily conceals Aybee's true nature, Aybee was mistakenly granted knighthood in the Order of the Emperors' Guard along with the others, after certain events on Jode/Pretoria. Such an occurrence would be most humiliating to the emperor, so it has become imperative that Aybee's "true identity" not become a matter of public knowledge.

Tourist Trap

"Where have you been, Doc? We waited as long as we could, but then we went ahead and ordered dinner without you. Aybee ordered for you, but it must be cold by now."

"Never mind about that, Dur. Just be thankful that Emperor Strephon gave us the free tickets to come to Capital."

"Sure, but what's up?" Dur asked.

"It took a little pull, but I was able to change our jump reservations. We can spend two whole weeks at the Ancient site on Antiquity."

"Antiquity! In the Ian subsector? Two weeks?" Akidda Laagiir, the journalist, nervously dropped his fork onto the tablecloth. "Is there still time to change our tickets back? We can't spend two whole weeks on Antiquity."

"Why not, Akidda? Have you been there before?"

"No," Akidda answered. "No one has ever been to Antiquity, except for a pack of tourists with more money than brains. That whole planet is just a waste of time."

Dr. Krenstein scowled. "With all due respect, Akidda, perhaps you forget that Antiquity is the best preserved of all Ancient sites, and one of the first discovered. The fact that some of its facilities are open to view by ordinary citizens is of tremendous benefit. Nowhere else in the Imperium can one see the wonders freely visible at Antiquity."

"Freely visible? That's a laugh. It costs forty credits to go inside that Museum. The *World Review* on Mora did a series of articles about Antiquity about five years ago. Full holos and everything. You can see as much on the vidnet for six credits a month, and see it as often as you like."

"The exhibits on Antiquity are priceless," Krenstein offered.

"The guides are so paranoid that someone will swipe one of their priceless exhibits that they carry body pistols." Akidda looked more and more disgusted.

"But the excitement! To walk where the Ancients walked, more than 300,000 years ago."

"The planet doesn't even have an atmosphere. You have to wear a mask any time you leave your overpriced hotel. Not even the Museum is pressurized. That takes a lot of excitement out of walking around."

The scientist was unmoved. "Akidda, at the time of the Ancients, there was a city on Antiquity that would rival anything you could imagine. Do you realize what's left now? A crater, four kilometers across, and one building, untouched by time."

Dur Telemon, the ex-scout, had by now finished his meal and began to show some interest in the conversation. "Why don't we hold a vote? I'd like to see this place. What about you, Aybee?"

"Hold on just a minute, Dur," Akidda interrupted. "We can't vote like this. You know Aybee will just vote for whatever Krenstein wants."

"Not necessarily, Akidda. You seem to forget that I'm programmed to insure Dr. Krenstein's safety," the robot said. "If this planet presents unavoidable dangers, I vote no."

The doctor spoke again. "I don't mean to be unreasonable, Akidda, but I'm set in my purpose. I'll compromise with you—one week on Antiquity instead of two."

Akidda looked unimpressed. "Sure, I'll give you the week. It will be worth it, to see that look of unsurpassed boredom on your face after the first day."

Antiquity/Ian

Primary: Gurant, spectral class F6V. Mass: 1.622 standard. Stellar diameter: 1.64 standard. Luminosity: 7.19 standard.
Planetary System: Five major bodies. Four gas giants, one inhabited gas giant satellite (Antiquity, Vf), one planetoid belt.
Vf Antiquity: Mean orbital radius of primary: 419.7 million kilometers (2.8 AU). Period: 1343.69 days standard. Primary is small gas giant, designated Eshtakhish. Primary diameter: 32,010 kilometers. Density: 0.21. Mass: 3.28 standard. Ring (orbit #2) and five satellites...Antiquity, fifth moon (Vf); mean orbital radius: 2,750,700 kilometers. Period: 279.66 days. Diameter: 2920 kilometers. Density: 1.22 standard. Mass: .019 standard. Mean surface gravity: 0.30 g. Rotational period: 17 hours, 10 minutes, 6 seconds. Axial inclination: 4°18'18.9". Albedo: .188. Surface atmospheric pressure: 0.24 atm; composition—nitrogen-oxygen mix with sulfur and sulfur compound taints. Filter/respirator combination required to breathe the atmosphere. Hydrographic percentage: 34%, composition—liquid water. Mean surface temperature: 24.1°C.

Antiquity (0806 A223420-C) was discovered by Vilani explorers of the First Imperium. Descriptions from that era call Dinarnug (Antiquity) a "marginally habitable desolate gas giant moon", and as such it was largely ignored.

Shortly after Cleon established the Third Imperium, the system was superficially re-explored, but after that it was only occasionally visited.

During the Third Imperium's First Survey, an Imperial Scout vessel conducting a detailed scan of Dinarnug picked up a large, massive object buried 30 meters underground near the edge of a multiple crater formation. An archaeological team was dispatched to the site to excavate the object.

The "object" turned out to be a domed building, largely intact and containing many magical wonders indicating a fantastically high technology. Research confirmed that the site was built by the mysterious extinct race known as the Ancients. Unique among the Ancient sites discovered up to this point (and those found since, as well), this site was operational. The biggest problem the researchers faced was figuring out what things did and how they worked. Many items are still a mystery.

The findings of the "Antiquity Excavations" sparked interest in the media. About three centuries ago, the site was finally opened up to the general public. Antiquity is on the express boat route between Vland and Deneb, and the Ancients Museum at the excavation site is a popular tourist attraction.

Antiquity is a satellite of the system's outermost gas giant. The moon has a very thin atmosphere, tainted by sulfur compounds. The world shows evidence that it once had a denser atmosphere: erosion typically caused by wind and rain abounds. It never rains on Antiquity now; the little water vapor still in the air precipitates out as dew at twilight each evening. The blast crater at the Museum site shows no erosion, indicating it was made during or after the time that the atmosphere was lost.

Another peculiarity of Antiquity is that its orbital plane differs by nearly 30 degrees from the orbital planes of the other 4 moons.

The Museum of Antiquity

Antiquity offers a variety of amusements to the tourist. Foremost among these is the Museum of Antiquity, housed in a monadium building built by the Ancients 300,000 years ago. The Museum site lies about 15 km from the starport. The Ancients Dome is near the edge of the large blast craters where a city is supposed to have stood.

More adventurous tourists may be interested in an air-raft tour of the craters. Tours of this type last about two hours and are "specially priced" at 280 credits. Tourists on these tours are given an opportunity to walk about the floor of the craters. Respirator/filter masks are provided at no additional charge. Special permits are required to explore on one's own, and artifacts may not be legally removed from Antiquity.

The Museum of Antiquity is privately operated, although the Ancients Dome and its exhibits belong to the Imperial government. Admission to the Museum costs 60 credits for the standard 30-minute tour. The entire tour is conducted by guides carrying body pistols, and security at the Museum is tight.

The separate buildings at the site of the Museum of the Ancients, including the Ancients Dome, are connected by airtight passages. A compressor system provides purified air, so masks are not needed to breathe.

The order of the standard tour takes visitors successively through Rooms A, B, C, D, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, and back out through A. Questions are not allowed during the tour, but interested visitors are encouraged to visit the Museum Gift Shop, located in a small building a short walk from the Museum entrance. The tour itself is conducted through earphones worn by each visitor. The guide does nothing but lead the group to the proper room at the proper time.

The Museum itself is of monadium (see Library Data). The entrance to Room A is a low archway extending a few feet out from the building. The monadium of this arch is shattered and cracked at its outer edges, but is still as solid as ever.

Considering that everything in the Museum is at least 300,000 years old, it is astonishing that some artifacts still work, and all of them look brand-new.

In the following room descriptions, the sentences in quotation marks represent what the characters hear over the tour headphones. Other sentences describe the actions of the tour guide.

Room A: "This corridor is the entryway to the center of the complex."

Room B: "The 'Light and Noise Room' is the first room on your tour, and the most unusual in shape. Its walls are randomly sized and shaped, protruding at odd angles from the floor, ceiling, and walls. A few meters from the door, you can see a single chair protruding from the floor. The chair is immovable and appears to be of one piece with the floor.

"As you can observe, strange, random sounds emanate from the room, and the walls change in color and reflectivity at random intervals. Now watch what happens in the room."

On the wall outside the room is an irregularly-shaped, flat yellow area. When the guide touches this shape, it turns blue, and the activity inside the room changes. Beams of pale green light, about 8 cm wide, stream out from different walls every few seconds. In addition, an object thrown into the room leaves a holographic trail, showing its path for a few seconds before it fades out.

"The mechanism for these effects is unknown, as the entire room is apparently made from solid featureless monadium. When your guide touches the blue area outside, it changes back to yellow, and the holographic effects stop, but the sounds are continual. No purpose for this room is known."

Referee: This room was used for recreation by the Ancients. The "light ball" demonstrated in Room A was manipulated by using a rod which emitted a low-level laser beam. Bouncing the ball against the different wall colors gave the player different scores. The sounds in the room report the present total score and the scoring opportunities of the different surfaces.

The room had different settings for level of play and number of players. The room is set at the highest level, causing the walls to change as often as they do, and to emit their own beams to interfere with the player. The "trace" feature of the room allows observers to watch the play as it occurs.

Room C: "The 'Mysterious Corridor' leads to a flat, solid wall. Its original purpose is unknown, as are many of the rooms of the Museum, but it is now used to demonstrate the 'Sliding Cube' and the 'Light Ball'. The cube is apparently solid monadium, about 20 cm on a side, and is too heavy for any human to lift. It sits on the floor at one end of the corridor. Notice that when your guide lightly taps one edge, it starts to slide down the corridor, speeding up slightly before coasting to a stop. Nothing whatsoever is known of the contents of this cube.

"The ball has a diameter of about 40 cm. It is brightly colored in smooth, random patterns, and it hovers above the ground about one meter. It can be moved by touching it, but there is a more interesting way: watch as your guide shines a weak flashlight at the ball, and you will see the ball move away from the light. When the ball reaches the end of the corridor, it bounces off the wall and returns almost to its starting point."

Room D: "The 'Console Room' is a favorite with tourists. It is surrounded by a corridor, separated from them by an impenetrable monadium wall only 2 mm thick. In the center of this room stands a lone console, still glowing with blue and yellow indicator lights. Please stand along the walls, as directed by your guide. Notice that as he lightly touches the left edge of the console, a holographic image of a small legless chair appears, floating directly in front of the console. Now watch your guide."

The guide slowly walks through the holograph, when suddenly he sits in the chair, which supports him.

"The chair is obviously too small for a full-grown human. By touching the console, scientists can change the pattern of the blue and yellow lights, but the function of the console is unknown. As the guide touches the right edge of the console, the image of the chair disappears."

Referee: The console is still operational, but the devices that it monitored were destroyed 300,000 years ago.

Rooms E and F: "These rooms are corridors, giving access to most of the other rooms in the complex."

Room G: "This room contains several display cases of various monadium scraps discovered on Antiquity. The highlight of the room is an artifact that still operates, although its purpose is unknown. As you can see, the device consists of one flat, round 3D display screen about 30 cm across, and a detachable control panel about 5 cm wide and 45 cm long. Scientists have not been able to detect any means of communication between the control panel and the screen. The screen itself displays a number of small, colorful shapes, moving about in a random pattern. The settings on the control panel can be changed, as your guide is doing now, and the speed and color of the shapes will change."

Referee: The device is an Ancient educational toy. It displays the activity and motion of sub-atomic particles at a greatly reduced speed.

Room H: "This room contains a display of over 600 coyns, like those now used by the Droyne race in its casting ceremony. The coyns are all of solid monadium."

Room I: "This small, round room demonstrates monadium 'Spinners'. Each spinner is a flat disk, about 10 cm across and 1 cm thick. A cut along one radius allows a small section of each spinner to be bent out of line from the disk at an angle of about ten degrees. Some spinners spin about their centers; others are motionless. What is intriguing is that those that are spinning were spinning when originally found. No way has been found to stop them except by holding them fixed, as the guide is now doing. Notice that when he releases the spinner, it comes to rest about 0.5 cm above the surface below it, and then starts to spin again. No way has been found to make the others start to spin."

Referee: The spinners were used as automatic stirrers in the laboratories.

Room J: "This room, identical in shape and size to Room I, contains several display cases full of 'Madimge Eggs', named for an extinct Vilani reptile. As you can see, each egg is about 7 cm long and 1.5 cm across its girth. The eggs are made of solid monadium, but a few are open, and reveal a variety of translucent colored crystals. Some of these crystals gleam, but others appear faded. Scientists studying the eggs believe that the crystals are another form of monadium. No way has been discovered to open those still sealed, or to reseal the open ones. Madimge eggs can still be found on Antiquity; some are thousands of kilometers from the Museum."

Room K: "The 'Massage Room', together with the next two rooms we will visit, forms what scientists believe was once an exercise area for the Ancients. This room has 18 holes in its floor, each about one meter wide and two meters deep. When our volunteer steps over the hole, he is gently lowered to the bottom by an invisible gravitational force. Additional forces then give a precise, gentle massage for 58 seconds, and then gravity pushes him up from the bottom to floor level. Different holes give massages of different lengths and intensities."

Referee: The hole used for the tour takes the least time. The "volunteer" paid an extra fee of six credits for the massage.

Room L: "The 'Steam Room' is unique among all the rooms in the Museum: it has operating doors. Airlocks at each side of the room are tightly fitted with two doors. If you look at the section of wall where your guide is pointing, you will find that the seams are invisible, and it is impossible to tell that that section of wall contains a door. Similarly, when a door stands open, it recesses into the wall in such a way that the entryway appears to have no door at all. It is not known how the doors are triggered, but they automatically open as we approach, and close after we have passed through them. The inner room that we are now passing through is filled with steam at a constant temperature and humidity."

Room M: "Please be careful! The floor of the 'Ledge Room' drops away suddenly a few meters inside, giving access to a large underground chasm. The chasm is well lighted, and the atmospheric pressure in it is higher than the rest of the room. Scientists hypothesize that the room was used for exercise, by jumping from the ledge and flying in the chasm's thicker air."

Area N: The outside wall of the building is of solid featureless monadium. Excavations searching for other entrances have dug entirely beneath the Ancients Dome. At this particular location, the wall has been dented by some unknown means.

The Vargr Artifact

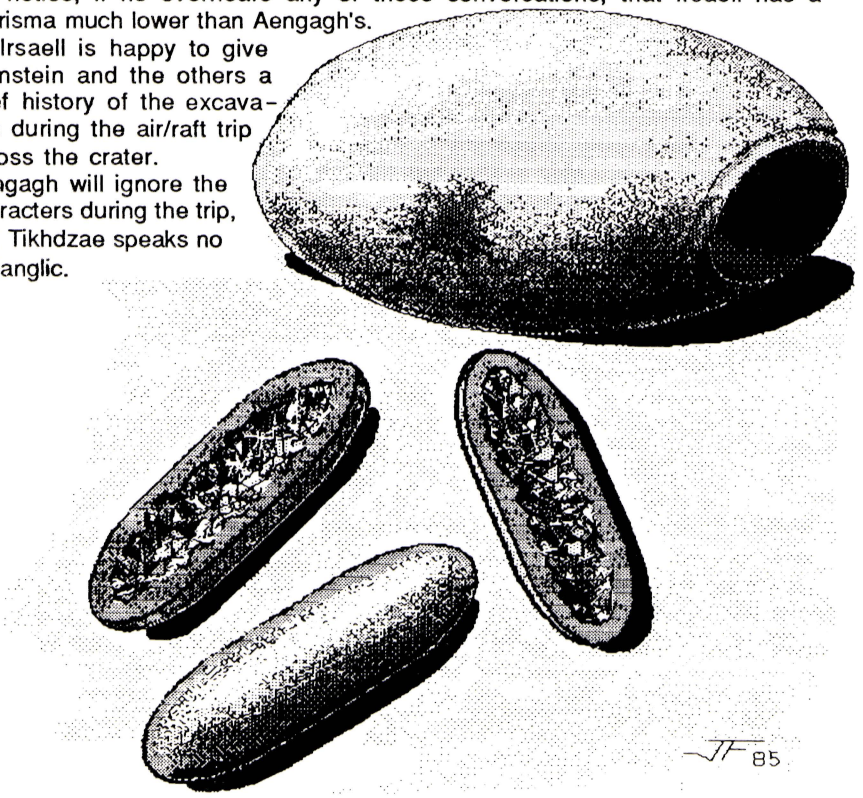
After the characters have finished their tour of the Museum of Antiquity, Dr. Krenstein will be accosted from behind by a gruff but polite voice. "Are you not Dr. Theodore Krenstein, the scientist from the Rhylanor Institute of Technology?" When Dr. Krenstein turns around, he should be surprised to discover that the owner of the voice is a Vargr, speaking flawless Galanglic without any hint of alien accent.

The Vargr is Irsaell, a scientist working with an excavation team on the other side of the crater. He recognizes Krenstein from holographic lectures on computer science. Aengagh, the Vargr scientist in charge of the excavation, has come to the Museum site to show local officials that the dig is making progress. A new artifact has been discovered, and Irsaell has deduced how it works, so Aengagh has grudgingly brought him along. Aengagh is also accompanied by his bodyguard, Tikhdzae, and Tikhdzae's ever-present submachine gun.

The artifact that the Vargr have discovered can be used to open or close madimge eggs. A darker spot on one side of the device controls its operation. Holding one's finger against the dark spot and passing a closed madimge egg through the marked end will open the egg when it comes out the other end. Similarly, an open madimge egg can be resealed by putting it into the unmarked end while pressing the dark spot. The device does nothing to eggs if the spot is not held.

If Krenstein seems interested in this, Irsaell will invite him to the excavation, and if Krenstein accepts, Irsaell will arrange permission with Aengagh. Aybee will notice, if he overhears any of these conversations, that Irsaell has a charisma much lower than Aengagh's.

Irsaell is happy to give Krenstein and the others a brief history of the excavation during the air/raft trip across the crater. Aengagh will ignore the characters during the trip, and Tikhdzae speaks no Galanglic.



The Dig

In playing this part of the adventure, the referee should be familiar with the Vargr NPCs and the article on Vargr culture in this issue.

The second Ancient complex was discovered on Antiquity four and one-half years ago, by a Scout expedition resurveying the area with the latest technological equipment. The building lay 290 meters below ground.

Aengagh, a Vargr scientist known for his writings about the Ancient site on Redi/Pretoria, found out about this discovery and petitioned Emperor Strephon for permission to excavate the site. Aengagh has great political influence in the Coreward sectors of the Imperium, so Strephon granted the license as part of an exchange program. Imperial scientists are currently excavating another site in Vargr space, with Aengagh's permission.

A painstaking excavation of the site proceeded under Aengagh's direction, and the building was finally uncovered about a month ago. The section of the building closer to the crater is open, with no doors in the doorways. The section of the building away from the crater is still sealed, despite an obvious area for a door and many attempts at entry.

Discoveries in the dig are promising. Not only has the device to open and close madimge eggs been found, but the Vargr have discovered hundreds of sealed eggs. Another interesting find has been "cushioned" monadium. Built-in furniture in some of the rooms is soft and comfortable despite being constructed of solid seamless monadium.

Aengagh has a Tech Level-13 lab ship orbiting Antiquity. He has brought much of its scientific equipment to the dig. There are a few Imperial observers at the site (making sure the Vargr don't sneak off with anything), but the Vargr ignore them.

The open building has three entryways; none of them show any signs of doors, but this is not unusual. The passageways extending from these entrances are chipped and cracked at their outer edges. The rooms in this building also have doorways without doors. Except as noted, the rooms are empty or contain only nondescript monadium furniture.

Room 2: A portable fresher has been installed in this room.

Room 3: This room contains the food supply for the excavation team.

Room 5: Tonon, the Vargr security officer, has stored a variety of slugthrowers and ammunition in this room.

Room 6: This room contains the scientific gear for the expedition.

Room 8: This room is used for Aengagh's living quarters.

Room 9: This room is used for Aengagh's office.

The hallway between Rooms 8 and 9 ends suddenly at a wall, despite the outside appearance that the hallway continues into the other area. The Vargr have tried many methods to breach this wall, including high explosives and use of a PGMP-13. The wall looks cleaner, but otherwise the energy weapon has had no effect, and Aengagh has returned it to his lab ship.

Aengagh will show all of this to the characters, intending to impress them with his direction of the excavation, and the technical difficulties he is encountering. His plan is then to send the characters on their way.

But near the end of his tour, when the characters approach the door at the end of the hallway, the three doorways leading out of the complex will seal suddenly. A few seconds later, the door leading into the other building opens. The characters and the Vargr NPCs are trapped in the Ancient complex, with nothing but a few guns, some scientific gear, and their wits.

Trapped!

Aengagh is still "top dog", and the characters must learn to cooperate with the egotistical Vargr if they are to survive. The Ancient building presents new mysteries, which the party must solve to get out safely. Aengagh has brought several technological devices from his lab ship, and they are avilable for use. There is plentiful food and water, stored in Room 3, to supply Aengagh and his assistants. Several dozen slug throwers are stockpiled in Room 5; these may come in handy against certain dangers.

But the characters' most immediate need is a supply of oxygen. The respirator/filter masks they wear are sufficient to provide them breathable air from Antiquity's thin atmosphere, but from where they stand, it appears that they are sealed off from it. Experimentation will soon reveal that some unknown source is providing an internal atmosphere that is comfortably breathable by both the humans and the Vargr, without the use of masks.

The atmospheric equipment (wherever it is located) will slow down over time, and will eventually shut off. Use this change according to your judgment to pace the adventure. If the characters are dawdling, the threat of a lack of oxygen may goad them into activity.

Aengagh follows a standard procedure once the new building is breached. Automatic sensor devices, floating above the floor by grav plates, enter a room first and record environmental data. Initial dangers to living beings are also avoided in this way. If you would rather your characters not use this equipment, send it into Room 14, or give it to an all-Vargr party.

One effect of the breach will be that the apparent charisma of the humans will drop in the eyes of the Vargr. It is of the utmost importance that the humans reestablish their charismas, or their lives may be in danger from the Vargr. Krenstein and Aybee have the best chance of succeeding in this. One possible scenario: Aybee uses higher charisma speech patterns, while remaining obviously subservient to Krenstein. This would push Krenstein's apparent charisma up, and if Krenstein can make a few lucky guesses using some of his scientific expertise, this would also help.

Another possibility is that Aybee could get into a fight. Tikhdzae is an ideal candidate for this, as are other Vargr of higher charismas who resented the way Aybee spoke. By personally defeating a Vargr in combat, Aybee's charisma would go up.

As the characters and the Vargr explore the new building, they will perhaps discover its purpose: it is a genetic laboratory, used by the Ancients to develop experimental forms of life. Among the new forms of life being developed were a modified Vargr, some new flying mammals, and several medicinal bacteria. The site was preserved during the Final War because it was desired for use as a germ warfare production facility. The war ended before it could be used for this purpose.

It is important to understand that this site was not where the Vargr race was originally created. That site is as yet undiscovered. This site was a purely experimental station, where entirely new forms of life were being developed, using several existing life forms (including the Vargr) for genetic material.

In coordinating this adventure, be sure to pace it so that your players are faced with challenges, but are not overwhelmed by danger. You know your group better than we can, so we can offer only general guidelines here. Several areas of the new building are inherently dangerous. In other areas, use the personality of the Vargr to add spice to the adventure. Keep in mind some of the

"lunatic fringe" beliefs that some of the Vargr have regarding their racial origins, as denoted in the NPC descriptions and the article on Vargr culture.

Here are the descriptions of the rooms in the new building:

Room 11: This area is a corridor, completely ringing the building.

Referee: The rooms adjoining this corridor have individual doors which are closed. The doors can be opened, and the rooms can be locked from the inside. From the outside, a closed room would be unnoticed, except for an irregular yellow shape on the wall of the corridor. Touching this shape turns it blue and opens up the door. Touching the shape again returns it to its yellow color and recloses the door.

A similar patch appears next to the door on the inside of the room. Pressing it opens and closes the door, as already described. A patch in the center of the door area can be used to lock the door from the inside.

Room 12: Entering this large, round room immediately causes a variety of noises and lights to emanate from the room. Some of the lights, shining in different colors from the smooth monadium walls, are aimed directly at anyone or anything in the room.

Referee: The effects may be frightening, but they are harmless. The room was used as an initial decontamination area. The device is fortunately set at a low level, so few effects would be noticeable.

Room 13: This room was used by the Ancients for storage. It contains a number of monadium boxes of various sizes and shapes. Some boxes are empty; the ones that are sealed can not be opened by the characters.

Room 14: This room is empty.

Referee: The room presents a danger to the party's equipment. Pressing the yellow shape outside the doorway opens the door, as usual. But after the door is closed, the blue shape remains blue for about 20 seconds, flashing before changing again to yellow. Upon opening the door again, the characters will find the room empty. The room was used by the Ancients for mass disposal, and anything that was in the room has been disintegrated, once and for all.

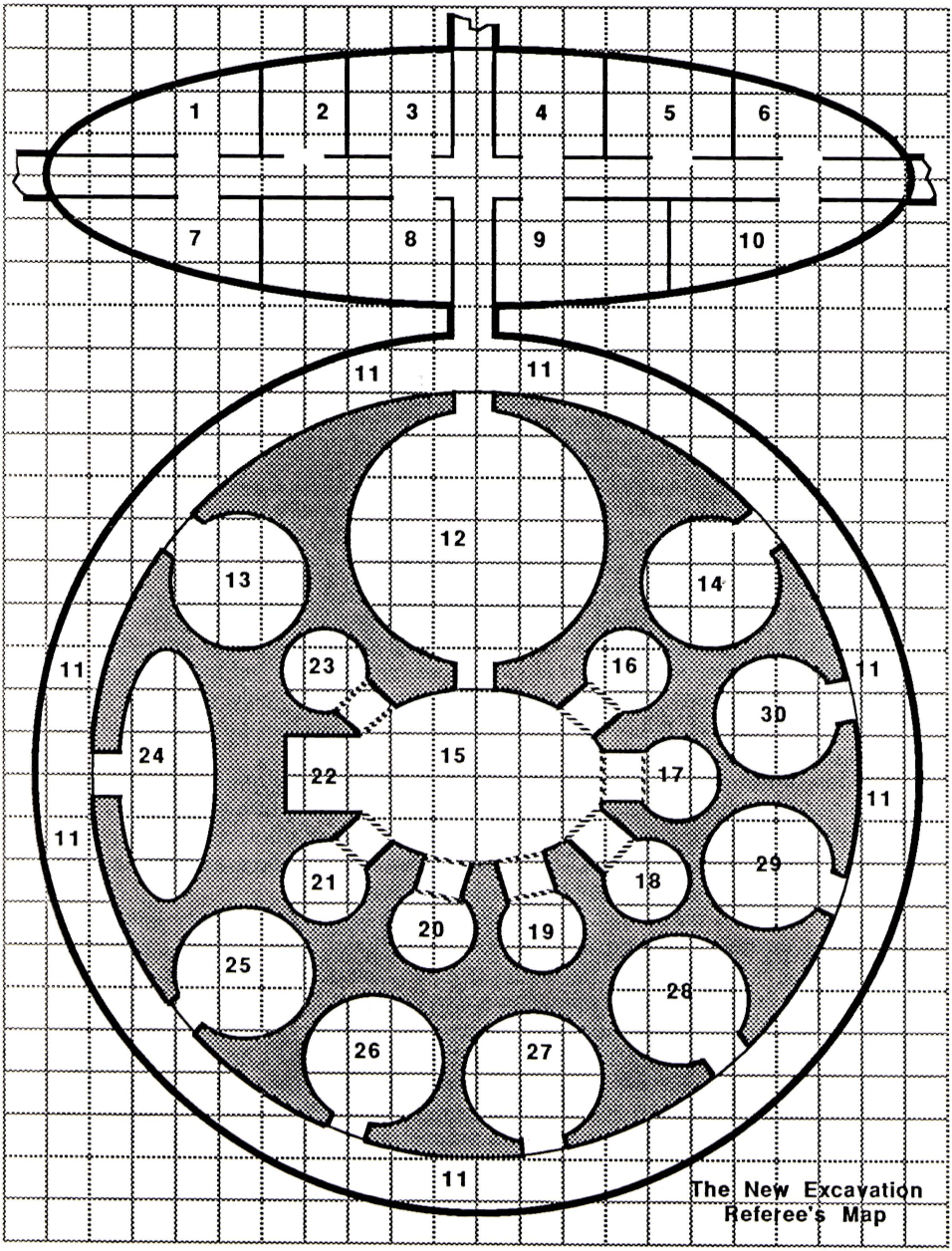
A safety feature built into the room will protect the humans and Vargr. If they should be closed inside it, the room will not operate. Aybee will also be protected in this way, but dead individuals and other equipment will disintegrate.

Room 15: This room looks identical to Room D in the Museum of Antiquity, empty except for a single console extending from the center of the room. The room is oval in shape, except for a squared-off section at one end. There are unusual designs on the room's walls; closer examination reveals these to be short hallways extending into small, round rooms.

Referee: Touching the left edge of the console at various places will cause holographic, rectangular surfaces to appear at various places in the room. Touching the right edge of the console causes these surfaces to disappear one by one. Each surface is one meter by two meters, hovering about one meter above the floor. Edge on, the surfaces offer no resistance, but from above each will support any amount of weight. Other controls on the console brighten and dim the lights above the surfaces.

The console also controls the force field areas for the environment rooms, described below. Controls on the console also open and close the individual doors in Room 12 and 15.

Finally, the console controls the area labelled as Room 22 on the map. Do not let the adventurers discover this the first time through this room, but wait until they have explored more of the complex. Room 22 may be accidentally activated while the party is trying to get the outer doors open with the console.



The New Excavation
Referee's Map

Rooms 16 - 21, 23: *Referee:* These rooms appear initially as some type of design on the wall of Room 15. Each of the rooms is sealed off by two force fields with an airlock between them. The force fields may be crystal clear, translucent, or opaque, depending upon the setting of the console.

Each of these rooms contains a different environment, hot or cold, dry or wet, with a variety of atmospheres, but none of the rooms' gases are dangerous if the doors are opened. The rooms are otherwise empty.

Room 22: This is a rectangular area, with walls of featureless monadium.

Referee: At the appropriate time (see "Ending the Adventure"), once the characters have discovered how to activate this area from the console, it will be simple for them to turn it on and off. When it is on, the entire surface of the west wall glimmers white.

Room 24: This ovate room houses nothing but a pyramidal monadium shape projecting at an odd angle from the north wall. The upper surface of the pyramid contains a small depression about 7 cm long and 1.5 cm wide. The lower surface has a variety of blue and yellow lights on it.

Referee: This is the Ancient library. Placing a madimge egg in the depression and turning on the device will project various holographic displays in the center of the room. Manipulating the blue and yellow lights on the device can speed up or slow down the projection, adjust the volume level of the sound, jump the projection forward or backward, or zoom in or out on the image. Viewing any image more than once with the device, because of the characters' ignorance of its workings, has a UTP of (FORMIDABLE, computer + 2, min(int, edu), REPEATABLE, 5 minute). Each review requires this successful roll.

Certain madimge eggs will be more interesting to the characters than others. Eggs taken from the dispenser in Room 26 will display detailed biological data on the appropriate characters. This information will be highly encoded, and difficult to understand, but the party may become aware that the eggs contain genetic information.

None of the eggs contains any images of Ancients, but many of them will show maps of various places, and scenes depicting the capture of various alien life forms. One of the eggs will show the location of Terra/Sol, and will contain scenes of the capture of various Terran carnivores and aquatic mammals. None of the Vargr are apt to enjoy watching these episodes.

Room 25: The north wall of this room has 6 hexagonal shapes inscribed upon it in a cluster. Each hexagon is about one meter from point to point, and has a familiar yellow shape in the center of it. Pressing the yellow shape turns it blue, and the hexagon opens, revealing a drawer about two meters long.

Referee: These drawers contain the genetic material used by the Ancients in their experiments. Each specimen appears perfectly fresh, as if it were alive just moments ago. As the characters open the drawers, they will find the following: 6 small reptilian animals; a salt-water tank with a Terran dolphin; an empty drawer; a neo-Vargr with 6 fingers on each hand and no tail; 4 small flying mammals; 8 dishes of semi-microscopic flatworms.

The Vargr will be particularly displeased with this room, especially those who belong to the "low Kaenguerradz" school of thought. If your players enjoy gun battles, this is your opportunity.

Room 26: This room is empty except for a thin monadium cylinder extending from the ceiling, reaching almost to a 10-cm square pedestal projecting up from the floor.

Referee: Putting anything organic between the the pedestal and the cylinder causes a beam of light to shine down from it. After a few seconds, a

small niche will appear in the wall, and a madimge egg will occupy the space. As soon as the egg is removed from this niche, the opening closes up, leaving a seamless monadium wall.

The light is harmless. The egg contains a genetic scan of the material placed upon the pedestal. It can be viewed in Room 24.

Room 27: This room contains a console similar to the one seen in Room D of the Museum of Antiquity.

Referee: The room can be used to view any area inside the Museum or the buildings at the dig. Operating the console has a UTP of (DIFFICULT, computer, int, REPEATABLE, 10 minutes). The difficulty stems from the problem of focusing the holographic viewer, and from the fact that most of the viewing areas that this device once saw were destroyed 300,000 years ago. To view a room requires a successful UTP roll for each 10 minutes of viewing.

Room 28: This room has monadium shelves and counters built along its wall. A variety of tools are standing in holders on the counters, and a Droyne stands looking at the open doorway.

Referee: Tikhdzae, the trigger-happy Vargr bodyguard, immediately assaults this Droyne with his SMG. As the Droyne is a monadium pseudo-biological robot, the bullets will bounce harmlessly off its surface. Roll for ricochet damage as explained in Tikhdzae's character description.

The robot can not be activated or moved (it may even be fastened to the floor, but this is difficult to determine). The tools are fastened to the counter by 2-meter monadium cords which extend from their bases.

Room 29: Along the wall are 12 baskets woven from monadium; each basket is filled with a different kind of fruit or vegetable. The food is fresh, and looks and smells delicious.

Referee: The food is edible, but will spoil after a few days (opening the room has accidentally turned off the mechanism which kept its quality). Some of it will be familiar; some are plant species that were extant 300,000 years ago, but which are now extinct.

Room 30: This room has a counter, one meter wide, extending down the middle of it. Every 20 cm along the counter's length, there is a small hemispherical depression in the countertop, 10 depressions in all. Next to each depression is a yellow light. Most of the depressions are empty, but some are filled with various crystals, granules, or liquids.

Referee: This room was used by the Ancients to create elemental matter. Touching a yellow light turns it blue for a few seconds; when the light changes back to yellow, the small bowl next to it contains the substance. The substances that can be created are mercury (silvery-white liquid), carbon (dull black powder), uranium (silvery-white metal), iodine (lustrous, grayish-black powder), sulfur (pale-yellow powder), lead (bluish-white metal), gold (yellow metal), bismuth (white crystals), zinc (lustrous, bluish-white metal), and fluorine (pale yellow, corrosive, poisonous gas).

To know precisely what these substances are without somehow analyzing them requires a successful roll for a task with a UTP of (DIFFICULT, REFEREE, edu, REPEATABLE, 10 sec); REFEREE: there is no skill in Traveller which can be used for a positive DM; apply a -5 DM to any character entirely lacking in a technical skill, prospecting skill, or medical skill. The fluorine will escape into the room unless some means is found to capture it when it is created. The characters will not be able to discover any means to change the settings for this device in order to create other substances. The Vargr Llugvinogh will take a particular interest in this room because of the gold and uranium.

Ending the Adventure

At this point in time, the characters want out of the Ancient complex, but don't know how to escape its monadium walls. The area of Room 22 holds the key. Unknown to the characters, when the wall of Room 22 glows, the wall at the end of Room C (in the Museum) also glows. The walls form a teleportation device. Any item, animate or inanimate, can safely travel from Room 22 to Room C. Only pure monadium can make the reverse trip from Room C to Room 22.

The initial reaction of the party to the glow of Room 22 should be one of cautious experimentation. In refereeing this part of the adventure, you should have the characters on the horns of a dilemma: do not let the players know that this is a safe exit. In particular, practice saying "into" the wall rather than "through" the wall, as in the following discussion.

When a monadium object is touched against the glowing wall of Room 22, it will pass into the wall without resistance; the wall seems to be some form of light covering a doorway. The monadium object can easily be pulled out of the glowing area.

If a non-monadium object passes into the glowing area, it can not be pulled back, but it can be pushed farther. After a few seconds, it will be gently pulled into the wall, until it disappears from sight.

If a living being touches the wall, he will also be absorbed into it without resistance. The part of the body which is in the wall will have no feeling in it, as if it is gone. After a few seconds, the person (human or Vargr) will be gently pulled into the wall, until he disappears from sight. A careful observer will notice that once the head passes into the wall, the rest of the body goes limp.

The wall was once operated as a two-way teleport, but the controls that exist now can be set only for this one-way operation, to prevent contamination of the lab during certain experiments. The "pulling" of the wall is a safety device. When a person holds part of his body in the wall, fluids and brain impulses are travelling in only one direction; this could cause a dangerous backup in that area of the body. Thus the wall will automatically "pull" anything standing in the wall, to relieve the pressure.

How will the Vargr react? Tikhdzae will, of course, shoot at it with his SMG. This presents no danger to those at the other wall, because momentum of the bullets will be lost in the teleport device, as explained in *Secret of the Ancients* by Marc W. Miller.

Aengagh is likely to order Irsaell to test the wall, since Irsaell is the scientist with the lowest charisma. Aengagh may also decide to use the humans for these experiments.

Once on the other side, the only way to communicate with those still in the laboratory is to pass various monadium objects into the wall. By passing madimge eggs in a pattern, for example, rudimentary communication could be achieved. A more subtle way to do this would be to pass the madimge egg opener back and forth, and place messages within the hollow eggs themselves.

The most successful ending to this adventure, from the scientific community's point of view, would recognize that the area can never be entered again. Those still inside should therefore holograph everything, and then pass anything not tied down into the wall leading to the Museum and outside.

The Vargr

Aengagh 653BBF Age 50 8 terms Cr 27,000
(Vargr Scientist, retired) Born: 065-1051
JOT-2, Computer-2, Carousing-2, Infighting-2, Tracked Vehicle-1, Navigation-1
Possessions: Tech Level 13 Lab Ship, loaded with scientific gear.

Aengagh supervises the Ancient archaeological dig under special license from Strephon, emperor of the Imperium. A cursory look at Aengagh's skills would lead a human to believe him unqualified, but among Vargr in the Corridor Sector, Aengagh is a highly respected scientist. Aengagh's word is law to the Vargr at the site, and they obey him unquestionably and without hesitation.

Aengagh has made a name for himself by travelling through Vargr space lecturing on various subjects. In none of these subjects is Aengagh an expert, but his skill in motivating other Vargr is legendary and often feared.

It is up to the characters to learn how to successfully handle Aengagh. If they can convince him of the importance of a task it can surely be accomplished with all the Vargrs' cooperation. They can succeed only if they gain his cooperation. Without his help, the characters will find the Vargr uncooperative and working at cross purposes.

The players will not, of course, know Aengagh's charisma value. But Aybee, who can speak Gvegh, will immediately realize that it is higher than usual, because of the difficulty Aybee will have in understanding Aengagh (see Vargr languages article).

Aengagh's full name is: Rangkneugzoullgvozokhsrre Lorrgkaerzgzugznug Aengagh. Aengagh, his family name, means "smooth tongue." Over the years he has added to his first and middle names syllable by syllable.

Aensorr 864784 Age 24 1 term Cr 6,100
(Vargr technician) Born: 326-1076
Computer-1, Electronic-1 TL13 Hand Computer

Aensorr, a distant relative of Aengagh, is not qualified for the work he is doing on the dig. He does not know any Galanglic. He is a follower of the "low kaenguerradz" school. He will attack violently in order to prevent others outside from learning of the neo-Vargr discovered in Room 25.

Irsaell 6C4EA3 Age 47 7 terms Cr 15,000
(Vargr scientist) Born 009-1054
JOT-4, Computer-3, Mechanical-3, Gravitics-2, Electronic-1, Grav Vehicle-1

Irsaell is the most technically capable of the Vargr in the group, but the other Vargr ignore him because of his low charisma. He is fluent in written and spoken Galanglic, and has viewed many of Dr. Krenstein's books and articles on holographic media.

Kfolgzokhto 937874 Age 23 1 term Cr 1,000
(Vargr technician) Born 158-1077
Computer-2, Electronic-1

Kfolgzokhto is young and eager to learn. He is from the high-population world of Irasumshu/Ian, so he knows Galanglic and gets along well with humans.

Llugvinogh 949761 Age 28 2 terms Cr 500
(Vargr loner) Born: 237-1072
JOT-1, Prospecting-1, Electronic-1, Forgery-1 Gun, Mid Psg

Llugvinogh is also unqualified for his work here. In fact, Llugvinogh sneaked into the dig using forged identity papers. He is hoping that he will come across something worth stealing, at which time he will sneak away with it. He carries a concealed body pistol under his vest. He knows a few words of Galanglic slang and criminal jargon.

Naesoughu 4C7794 Age 30 3 terms Cr 2,500
(Vargr ex-navy)
Medic-3, Ship's Boat-2, Vacc Suit-2, Computer-1, Electronic-1

Naesoughu is the physician and ship's boat pilot for Aengagh. He knows no Galanglic.

Onkunu 648BA7 Age 46 7 terms Cr 30,000
(Vargr scientist) Born 149-1054
Computer-3, JOT-2, Medical-2, Mechanical-1, Electronic-1, Gravitics-1

Onkunu is a hard-working, jovial, practical joker. He is the most qualified scientist among the Vargr, after Irsaell. His high charisma makes him second in command (after Aengagh) over the other scientists and technicians. He can read Galanglic articles in his areas of technical expertise, but he knows no spoken Galanglic.

Tikhdzae 388855 Age 24 1 term Cr 3,000
(Vargr ex-army) Born: 106-1076
Infighting-1, SMG-1, Rifle-1

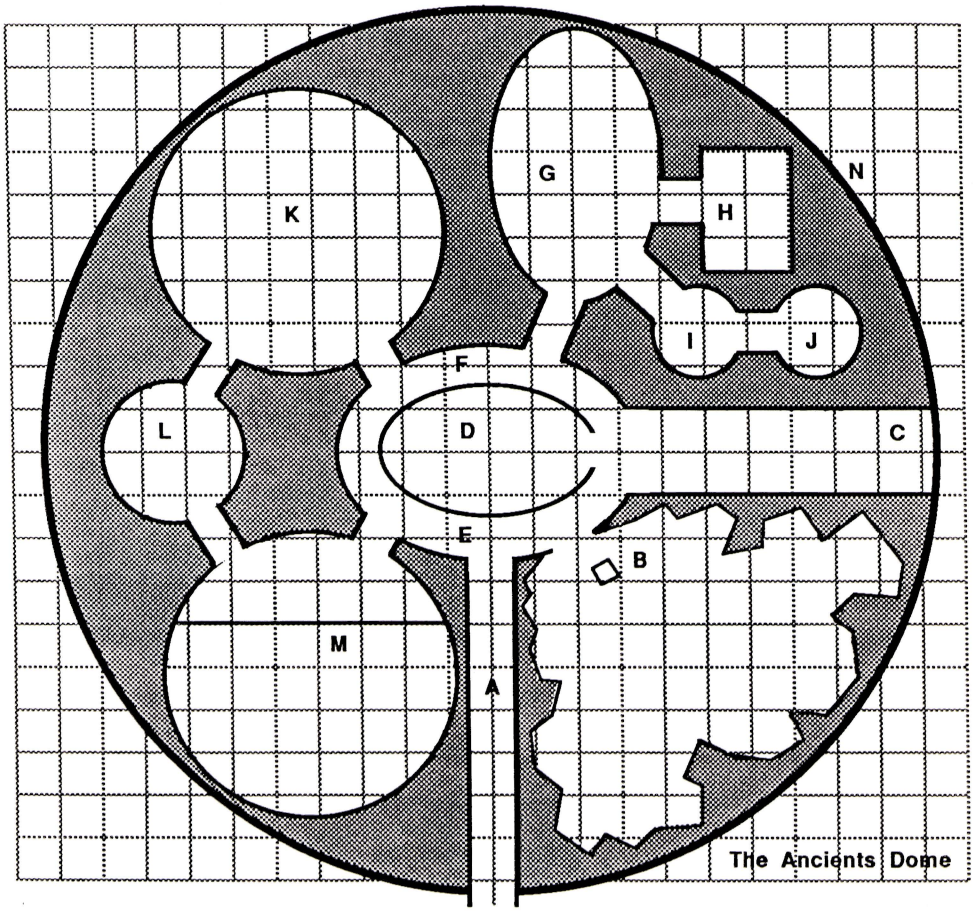
Tikhdzae is Aengagh's trigger-happy bodyguard. He carries an SMG with him at all times, and likes to shoot it at various targets for fun. Anyone careless enough to stand near Tikhdzae when he fires at monadium objects must roll 10 or less on 2D to avoid 2D ricochet damage. Tikhdzae does not know any Galanglic.

Tonon 84B637 Age 26 2 terms Cr 5,700
(Vargr ex-merchant 3rd officer, ex-army lieutenant) Born: 198-1074
SMG-2, Tactics-2, Vacc suit-1, Rifle-1, Bayonet-1

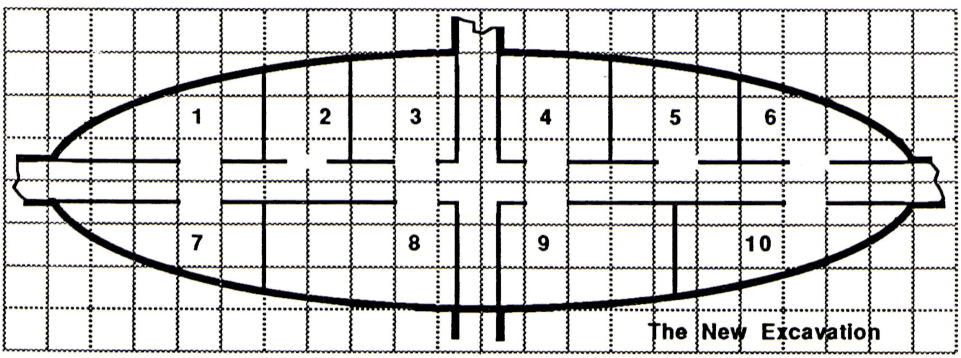
Tonon oversees the general security of the dig. He speaks some Galanglic, but does not know any scientific terminology. He is neutral to humans, unless they get in his way.

Vidorsngigoung 564E65 Age 32 3 terms Cr 3,500
(Vargr scientist) Born 199-1068
Electronic-2, Computer-1, Mechanical-1, Gravitics-1

Vidorsngigoung is a younger scientist with the group. He knows no Galanglic, and dislikes humans. He believes in some of the principles of the Church of the Chosen Ones.



The Ancients Dome



The New Excavation

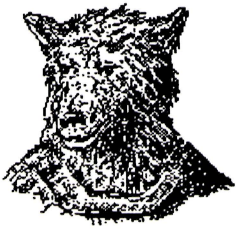
Aengagh

Aensorr

Irsaell

Kfolgzokhto

Llugvinogh



Naesoughu

Onkunu

Tikhdzae

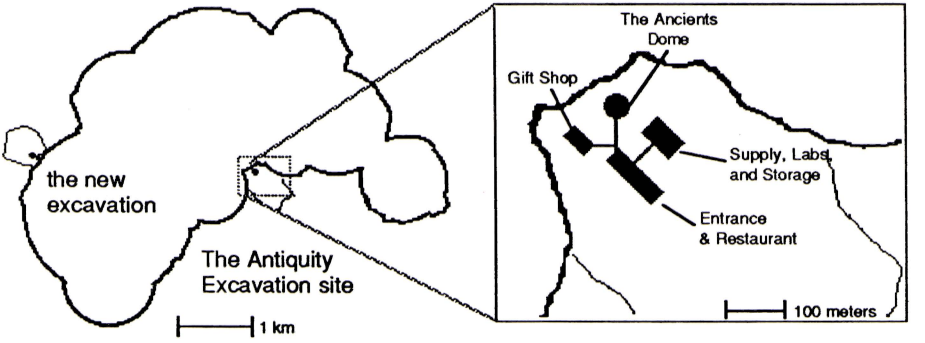
Tonon

Vidorsngigoung

The Vargr

Arranged alphabetically for easy reference

Players' aid



NOTES ON PLAYING THE VARGR

Playing alien NPCs can be difficult, but with practice, can also be very rewarding.

Vargr are the least alien of all the major races, so they make a good alien race to practice with.

The main point to remember when playing Vargr is that they are not just humans in "dog suits". They not only don't look human, they don't act or think like humans either. If you can master this idea, you are well on your way to learning to role-play convincing aliens.

DETERMINING VARGR REACTIONS

REACTIONS (2D)

Die	*Reaction*
1-	Violent. Immediate attack.
2	Hostile. Attack on 4+.
3	Hostile. Attack on 6+.
4	Hostile. Attack on 8+.
5	Hostile. Attack on 11+.
6	Hostile. May attack.
7	Unreceptive.
8	Noncommital.
9	Interested.
10	Intrigued.
11	Responsive.
12	Enthusiastic.
13	Genuinely Friendly.

The reaction table from Alien Module 3, *Vargr*, is reproduced above. If the referee desires, he can roll on the reaction table for the NPCs at appropriate intervals, with the following DM:

+ character's charisma - encounter's charisma; if zero, subtract character's charisma only

Character is the individual approaching; *Encounter* is the individual reacting using the table. Use the negative DM only with a high-charisma Vargr's reaction when a subordinate disputes the high charisma Vargr's leadership.

A hostile or attack reaction is not always an all-out physical assault or gun fight—it may be a verbal attack, a snarl, a rough shove, even a quick bite that intentionally draws no blood. Feigning for a holstered weapon or drawing and pointing a weapon is also a common Vargr attack reaction. The Vargr temperament typically wears heavy on the nerves of human companions.

High-charisma Vargr are viewed as strong, brave, and deserving of respect. Low-charisma Vargr are viewed as being "in the debt" of others. While the Vargr are often rash, they are not stupid, even though to a human, a Vargr seems highly subject to "whims".

Human Charisma Equivalent: Use the human's social standing divided by 3 (round fractions down). To this add one per level of leadership skill, and one per every two levels of liaison skill.

HANDLING THE VARGR IN THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure has almost a dozen Vargr NPCs in it. If handling that many NPCs is difficult for you to referee, just split up the Vargr and send as many of them as you wish off in a different direction to explore the Ancients Lab. Tikhdzae can be lots of fun if he just roams about, showing up to shoot his submachine gun whenever he feels like it.

The various schools of thought which exist concerning the Vargr's origins and destiny in the universe should affect how you play certain Vargr NPCs. An example that occurred in one of our playtesting sessions will help illustrate this.

When the group reached Room 25 and found the neo-Vargr in a pull-out drawer, Aensorr (of the "low kaenguerradz" school of thought—see the Vargr

culture article) , Irsaell, and Kfolgzokhto had the following conversation:

Aensorr: "This does not exist."

Irsaell: "Excuse me, Aensorr, but it *is* here."

Aensorr: (agitated) "No matter, it is *not here*—"

Kfolgzokhto: (interrupting) "It exists!"

Aensorr: "No one is to learn of this!" (pulls his gun and fires at Kfolgzokhto)

At this point a gun battle broke out in the room, with everyone out to get Aensorr before he silenced them. Once Aensorr was put out of commission, the battle ended. Kfolgzokhto and Irsaell took Aensorr's body and put it in the empty drawer. Of the other Vargr who noticed Aensorr missing, only Aengagh was disturbed by it.

Low-charisma characters dealing with high-charisma characters should try not to waste the superior's time. In our playtesting, Tikhdzae (with his SMG, of course) often reminded the other Vargr not to waste Aengagh's time.

Kfolgzokhto has a relatively high charisma and was the highest among the Vargr in the characters' team during one playtest. Since Vargr are so conscious of charisma, as Kfolgzokhto approached a yellow spot, he would ask "Uethall?" (volunteer?), hesitate for a brief moment while he glanced around, and then press the yellow spot himself. Kfolgzokhto did this for two reasons. First, to press a yellow spot and enter the unknown does require courage, so asking for a volunteer is appropriate. Second, since Kfolgzokhto allowed very little time before pressing the spot himself, the chance of someone usurping him from his own display of bravery was slight.

Touches of personality like these add a lot of fun and depth to the Vargr NPCs. We hope these examples will help you to play Vargr more effectively.

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Playing the Characters

KRENSTEIN

"Playing the characters" gives details about role-playing the adventure's important characters. In this issue we focus on Dr.Theodor Krenstein.

A fundamental rule of effective role-playing is "know your character". The more you know about your character, the easier the character is to role-play in an enjoyable and believable manner. A good way to learn more about a character is to examine his (or her) past. To that end, here are details of Doctor Theodor Krenstein's life.

Theodor Krenstein was born on the planet Rhylanor (in the Spinward Marches) on the Imperial date 173-1042. He is an only child, the son of an air/raft shuttle technician (his father, Gadden Krenstein) and a psychologist (his mother, Jaeni Krenstein).

Theo (as his parents called him) often tinkered with the ruined gravitic sub-assemblies his father would bring home; from this he developed a deep interest in high-tech devices. From his mother, Theo developed an interest in the human mind.

Before Theo could read he would watch holovideos from his mother's library on the comvideo network; his parents were amazed that he required so little programmatic simplification. Theo was a phenomenally bright child.

Theo soared through school because of his rapid comprehension and total recall ability. But some subjects bored him and many classes progressed too slowly for him, so he daydreamed a lot. Theo received five Imperial patents for ideas he devised while bored in class!

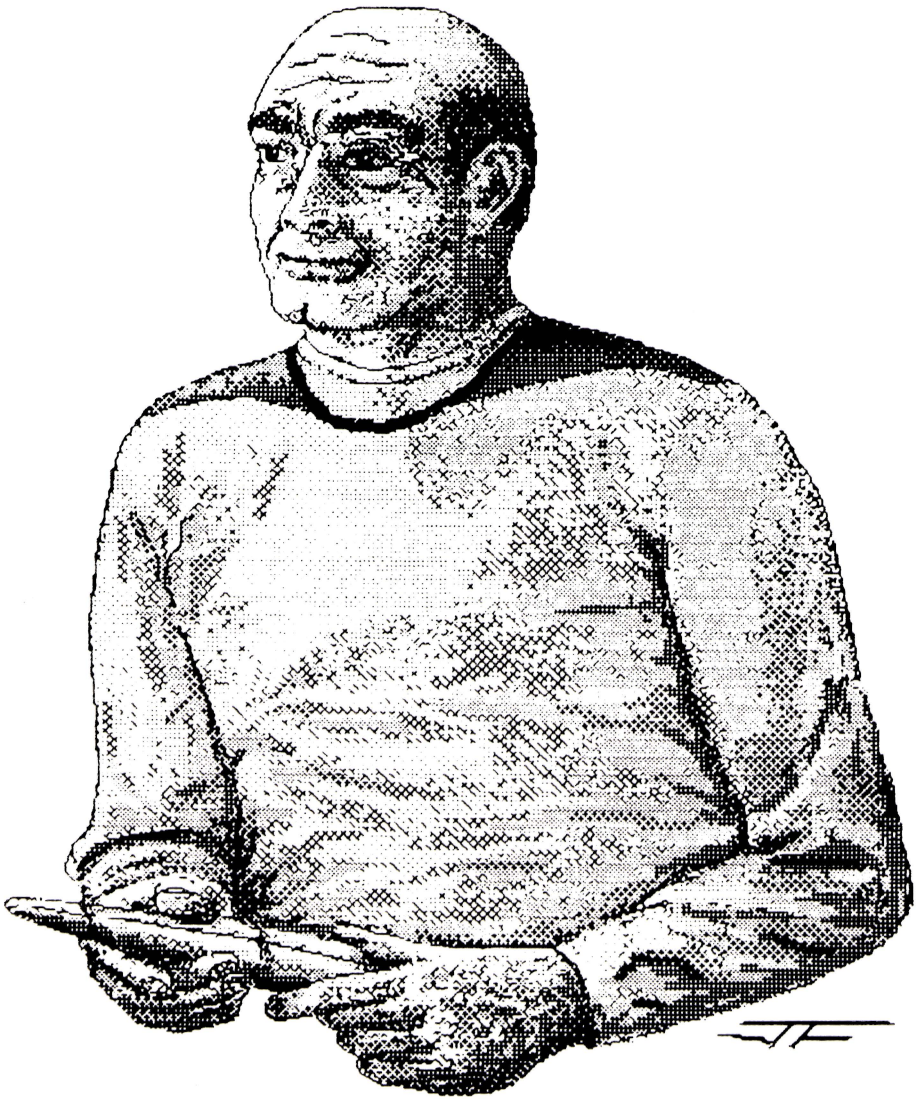
Theodor Krenstein was accepted at the Rhylanor Institute of Technology a week after his eighteenth birthday. This was no small feat since the Institute enrolls only the best minds of the Spinward Marches and Deneb sectors. An appointment by a respected scientist is required before the Institute will even consider the applicant. A barrage of exams and tests follows the appointment. Krenstein polished off the tests with no difficulty.

Krenstein started to major in computer design, but after the first year, switched to computational robotics. He managed to compress 8 years of doctorate study into 6 years.

After he was graduated, Krenstein accepted a professorship in Robotic Science at RIT. A young co-ed in one of his classes caught his eye; even though her major was economics, she was captivated to hear him talk of the potential of robotics and artificial intelligence. After the close of the school year, Sashii and Theodor were married.

Krenstein continued to further his career at RIT. After four years as a professor, he became Dean of the School of Robotic Science. After three terms as Dean, he was appointed to the Graz Redniz Chair of Computational Robotics, largely because of his work on the school's new advanced pseudo-biological robot, AB-100. During this time Krenstein and Sashii had three children: a daughter, a son, and another daughter.

Krenstein is a prolific author, having produced dozens of articles and several books on various aspects of artifical intelligence, computers, and robotics. His writings, lectures, and designs are popular on many worlds throughout the coreward regions of the Imperium, and they are available in



many forms: old-style paper documents, 2D video, and 3D holovideo.

The Imperial Scout Service has commissioned several robot designs from Krenstein and the RIT robotics team. During a test of one of the designs in 1090, the fateful kidnapping occurred (see Krenstein's character description on page 9). After this, Krenstein started work on what Sashii often referred to as "our fourth child", Aybee.

Krenstein was devastated when his wife was killed in a freak accident in 1098. The tragedy forced him to re-evaluate his future and had a large impact on his final decision to pull up roots and leave Rhylanor, RIT, and its many memories behind.

Dr. Theodor Krenstein is now travelling the Imperium with his revolutionary experiment in artifical intelligence and robotic learning, Aybee Wan Owen.

Library Data

The following information may be found in any computer library program.

Ancients: Highly intelligent race which gained prominence approximately 300,000 years ago. Most of what is known about the Ancients has been gleaned from archaeological excavations of Ancient sites, the remains of cities, bases, outposts and settlements of the Ancients. Dating procedures have established that a Final War spanning a 2,000 year period destroyed virtually all of the Ancients at that time.

The influence of the Ancients is broadly felt in the universe today. Humans from Terra were transported to many worlds by the Ancients; the Vargr have been shown (through genetic testing) to be descendants of genetically manipulated Terran canines.

Ancient artifacts which have been discovered show a very high tech level and an equally high degree of sophistication, often revealing new, previously undiscovered or unexploited technologies.

Corridor: Imperial sector containing 267 systems dramatically split by the Great Rift; 69 systems lie rimward of the Rift and 149 systems form the coreward third of the sector. Corridor is named for its role connecting the old well-established Vland sector with the frontier sectors Deneb and the Spinward Marches. The name Corridor dates from about 140, and has displaced the old Vilani name (Eneri, rough translation: "star salad") for the sector.

Digest Touring Award: Outstanding journalism award offered by *The Travellers' Digest* every seven years. The recipient is given honorary membership in the Travellers' Aid Society (worth 1 million credits); he is then expected to travel during the tenure of his award, and to submit a feature article about his latest journey once every thirteen weeks. The intent of the Digest with this award is to "promote understanding of the cultural diversity within the Imperium". The most recent winner, in 1100, is Akidda Laagiir of Mora/Mora.

Droyne: Intelligent major race inhabiting scattered worlds throughout explored space. Droyne are winged, intelligent omnivore gatherers. Their society is differentiated into six castes, determined at adolescence in a ceremony involving small metal disks called coyns. Droyne are known to be descendents of the Ancients.

Galanglic: "Galactic Anglic", the official language of the Third Imperium. Galanglic is a direct descendant of Anglic, the language used during the Rule of Man (-2204 through -1776). The popularization of Galanglic is important to the Imperium, because a common language known by all is beneficial to commerce. On many worlds, Galanglic is in fact a second language, used only in dealing with offworlders and Imperial officials. Although Galanglic is the official name for the language, it is often called Anglic by its speakers.

Monadium: Inpenetrable bluish-gray metal used as the basic construction material by the Ancients at the site on Antiquity/Ian. It has defeated all efforts to determine its exact composition: some experts believe it contains titanium. Even modern (TL 15) plasma and fusion weapons are unable to penetrate it.

Vargr Language and Culture

– Gary L. Thomas

The following article is excerpted from *Vargr Culture: An Introductory Survey*, published by Deneb University Press.

GVEGH

There is no "Vargr language" any more than there is a "human language", but some dialect of Gvegh is spoken by about 60 per cent of the Vargr encountered in the Spinward Marches, Deneb, Corridor, and the sectors immediately coreward. The word "gvegh" is a Vargr racial name meaning "tawny" or "light brown". Many Vargr racial names are color terms. For example, a closely related race, Gvegh-Aek, literally means "tawny-black".

(In this work, we will sometimes use the more familiar term "Vargr", but unless specifically noted, all references are to the Gvegh race and its language. The Gvegh alphabet appears in Figure 1.)

Every Gvegh conversation is a contest, with the charismas of the speakers at stake. The notion of charisma is central to the culture of all Vargr races. Charisma, called "kfaegzoukhin" in Gvegh, is a Vargr's prestige and force of personality. An individual's charisma may change many times in the course of a lifetime, depending on the individual's environment and success among fellow Vargr.

Cultural effects of charisma pervade all of Gvegh culture, including the language itself. Not only is Gvegh spoken differently between two speakers of different charismas, but the same individual will speak Gvegh differently when his charisma changes.

Vargr are always competing for attention and prominence, so it is common in Gvegh for speakers to interrupt each other. Gvegh speakers often challenge their listeners to interrupt by needlessly lengthening certain words and syllables. As a common example, a Gvegh speaker with a charisma higher than that of his listener will often hold the sound of the second-to-the-last syllable in a sentence for as long as possible, and then clip the last syllable short as an added insult to the listener.

Naturally, a Gvegh speaker with higher charisma can hold this syllable longer than can a speaker with lower charisma, but all must be careful not to hold the syllable too long, or the interruption will occur. It can be fascinating to listen to two Vargr with the same charisma trying to hold a conversation. Each one tries to delay as long as possible, always risking that the other may interrupt.

In a sense, the speaker with the higher charisma is demonstrating that he can waste the listener's time. This delay is particularly noticeable when a Vargr pronounces his own name, his pack's name or the name of his race.

Another important difference between Gvegh speakers with high and low charismas is the different grammar that they use. A Vargr with low charisma must include all the grammatical markers needed in his sentence. A speaker with high charisma may use the bare root forms of nouns and verbs, and use a different order of words in a sentence.

A GVEGH EXAMPLE

Gvegh grammar is too complicated to describe in an article of this length, but a brief example here may be illustrative of some of the concepts mentioned above. For our example, we will use the sentence, "The corsairs aimed their

lasers at the merchant's ship."

A low-charisma Vargr, using all the grammatical forms required, would say, "Udhdarroetsogzae kaghzllugheng dzaghzarrgaekszoerath udh udh kaghzasagang kaghzufukhoekalasakseng kaghzufukhoekalasakseng." (Certain words here are repeated because of grammatical rules.)

A high-charisma Vargr need say only the following: "Asag ufukhoekalasaks kuel arrgaekszoere kullugh darroetso." As befits his high-charisma status, he would lengthen the second-to-the-last syllable of many of these words, and may repeat some of the words for no reason.

INTERRUPTIONS

Naturally, this means that it takes a low-charisma Vargr longer to say something, because of the grammatical forms he includes. If the high-charisma listener gets bored with the length of time the low-charisma speaker takes to speak, then he will interrupt him.

In response to such an interruption, a low-charisma speaker may omit some of the grammatical indicators, but he must not lengthen syllables the way a high-charisma speaker would.

If a low-charisma Vargr omits too many of the grammatical markers, the high-charisma listener will interrupt with an extra lengthening of syllables. This serves to remind the low-charisma speaker of his proper place in the Vargr societal structure.

In short, whenever a Vargr listener is dissatisfied with the charismatic features shown by the speaker, the listener will interrupt. The original speaker may respond by modifying his speech patterns, or he may reassert his charisma by exaggerating his earlier speech patterns.

In a public speech, the same rules apply. It is not uncommon for a Vargr audience to talk during a speech or even to heckle the speaker. For this reason, Vargr public speakers with low charisma are rare.

Naturally, when a Vargr speaks, he takes into account the relative charismas of himself and his listener. A Vargr with high charisma will use low-charisma speech patterns when he speaks to another Vargr with higher charisma. Similarly, a low-charisma speaker of Gvegh may use high-charisma speech patterns when he speaks to an underling. For this reason, it can be difficult to determine the actual charisma of a Vargr without hearing him in several conversations.

Besides, the speech patterns a Gvegh uses reflect his own perception of his charisma. This may or may not be the charisma level he has in Vargr society. The tendency of any speaker is always to speak in a manner reflecting a higher charisma than he actually has. Listeners will interrupt to keep the speaker in his place.

There are other ways that a Gvegh can show a high charisma, other than by omitting grammatical forms and needlessly lengthening syllables. Verb tenses in Gvegh are dissimilar to those of Galanglic. Rather than showing the time that something occurs, Gvegh tenses show the charisma of the speaker. When speaking of a future happening, low- and high-charisma speakers use different verb forms.

Another habit of high-charisma Vargr, particularly annoying to humans, is to needlessly repeat words. Of course, if a Vargr does this too much, or uses the wrong verb forms, he will be interrupted by his listener.

An interruption is a Vargr's way of telling the speaker, "You think your charisma is higher than it actually is."

MORE INTERRUPTIONS

A description of a typical conversation may be in order. Imagine a low-charisma Gvegh, named Larksakh, speaking with Rrugo, who has a relatively high charisma. Larksakh begins the conversation, using all the possible grammatical markers. Rrugo gets tired of this and interrupts him. Larksakh continues the conversation, omitting some of the markers. As the two continue, Larksakh will tend to leave out more and more of the markers, and Rrugo will interrupt again. Poor Larksakh is first interrupted for including too much grammar, and then he is interrupted later for leaving out too much grammar.

Out of context, it is impossible to tell whether an interruption is because of too much grammar, not enough grammar, a desire to assert oneself, or plain rudeness.

GVEGH PROVERBS

Another way to get a glimpse of a culture is to look at some of the sayings handed down generation after generation. Gvegh is rich in the number of proverbs commonly used by its speakers. Most of these proverbs are used in a high-charisma form; by this, the speaker actually relies on the high charisma of the Gvegh race as a whole.

"Thursuth gha kvaekh?" "Where is death not allowed to go?" This proverb is typical of the Vargr response to too many rules. Besides reminding that some events can not be prevented by any rule, the proverb contains a thinly veiled threat against the listener.

"Ghakse faeng faeng faeng faengeg; dzedzdhougz faeng faeng kufaeng udheg." "A pup's ball is the pup's; a pup's teeth are the pack's." Vargr are highly individualistic, but society depends on loyalty to a group cooperating toward certain goals. Protection of the group against outside dangers is one of these goals.

"Khofaeghorz gvegh gvegh gnaedh faeng vargr rrirrg." "Vargr speech without Vargr teeth." This saying is used as an insult, directed toward anyone who can not back up what he says.

"Aekh kfaegzoukhin zersakha vargr; kfaegzoukhin zersakh kuvargr." "A Vargr without charisma is no better than a rock; a rock with charisma is better than an entire pack." This proverb points up the importance of charisma in Vargr society.

VARGR PSYCHOLOGY IN BRIEF

It is by now an established scientific fact that the Vargr race is the result of genetic manipulation of Terran carnivores by the mysterious race known as the Ancients. Individual Vargr react to this fact in different ways.

A few Vargr—the minority—have feelings of inferiority because of their racial origins. For them, life is a continuing struggle to assert their own self-worth by dramatic actions. These individuals are brash and often dangerous.

Most Vargr believe their special origin makes them more important than other races. This belief is known among the Gvegh as "kaenguerradz" or "racial superiority". Kaenguerradz takes two forms.

"High kaenguerradz" reasons that the Ancients had specimens of all the intelligent races of the time, and the Ancients would have been foolish not to produce one that was better than any other. A fanatical offshoot of the high kaenguerradz school is the Church of the Chosen Ones, which believes that the Ancients returned to the Vargr several times, improving the race to the point that

it could take its rightful place as the leader of this part of the galaxy. Some even believe that the Ancients will return again to bring this about. The Church has waned in influence since its founding 200 years ago, but it still has followers on many worlds.

"Low kaenguerradz" discounts the available evidence, and gives a startling reason for a belief in Vargr racial superiority. Proponents of this school of thought believe that the Vargr were the original sapient race on Terra, and that humans were genetically manipulated to produce intelligence. The Ancients did not want the pre-existing Vargr race to interfere with the experiments on the humans, so the Ancients exterminated the Vargr on Terra after transplanting a small breeding stock to Lair/Grnouf. Vargr who believe in low kaenguerradz have a high dislike for humans.

The Gvegh Alphabet

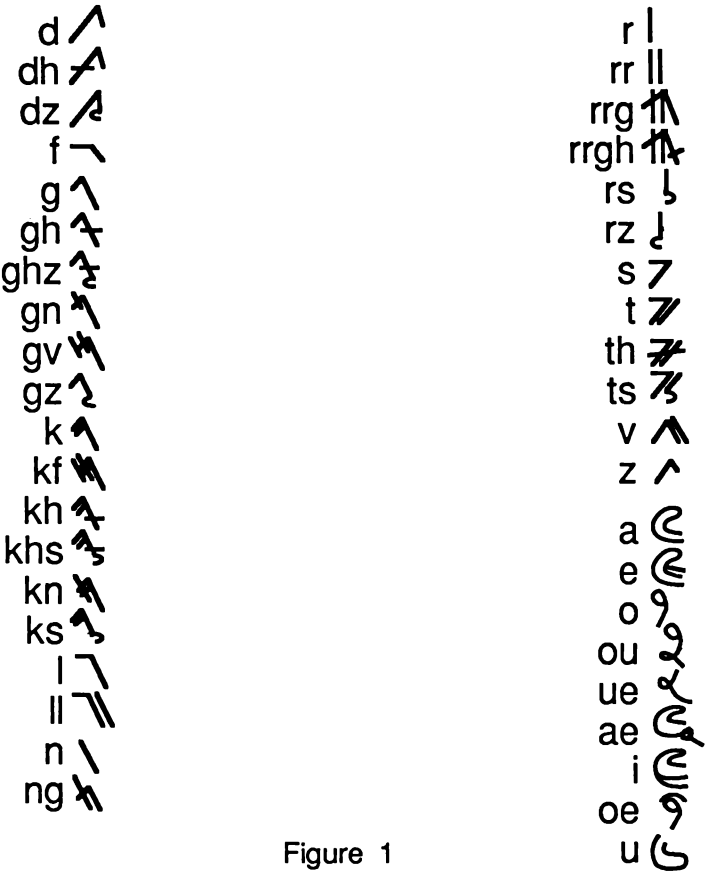


Figure 1

Convention: BASHCON '86

Date: March 1-2, 1986

Location: University of Toledo Main Campus, Toledo, OH

Description: The third gaming convention to be held by the UT Benevolent Adventurers' Strategic Headquarters (UT-BASH), featuring an RPGA AD&D tournament, an AADA Car Wars tournament, and more than 60 other role-playing, minatures and boardgaming events. Special guests will include Tim Green and Tom Moldvay.

Contact: For more information send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

UT-BASH
BASHCON '86
2801 W. Bancroft
Toledo, OH 43606

Ian Subsector

The Ian Subsector (subsector E of the Corridor sector) was fragmentarily settled by the Vilani during the First Imperium. When the Third Imperium began expansion spinward through Corridor, they found the coreward edge of this subsector inhabited by Vargrs. Several minor battles against tenacious Vargr were fought in this subsector during the Vargr Campaigns (220 to 348); Imperial authority in this subsector was established by the mid 200's.

After the Campaigns were over, a derelict underground Vargr city was found on the fourth moon of a gas giant in the Jubal system—complete with several hundred thousand living Vargr. Repeated attempts to contact the Vargr population there have resulted in the murder of several Imperial Scouts and many outside Vargr emissaries by the ill-disposed local Vargr. It is estimated that less than a hundred thousand Vargr remain at the site, but the Jubal system is still classified as a Red Zone.

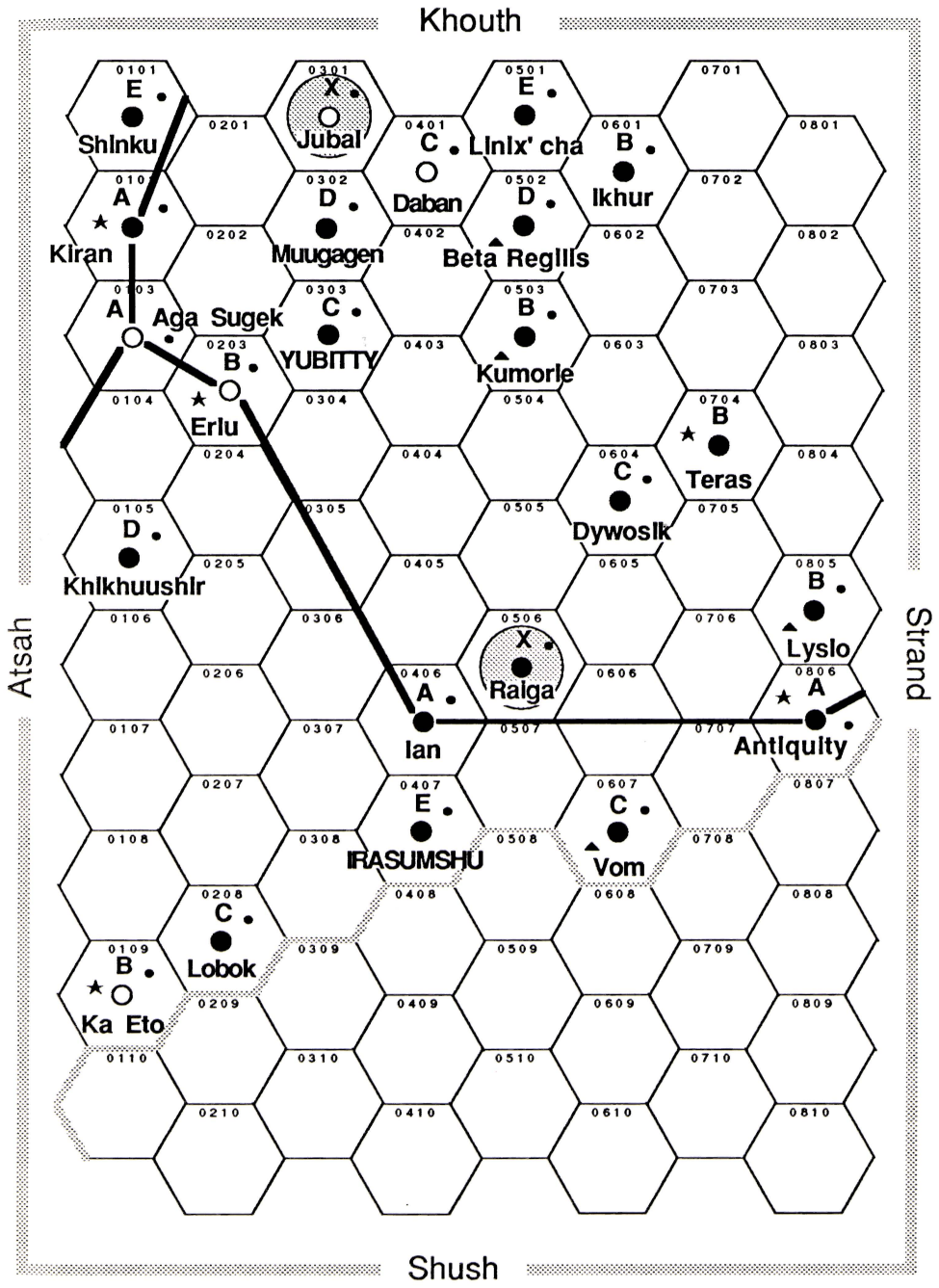
Some of the finest medical facilities within a radius of 20 parsecs exist at Kiran. Many go there seeking the best in medical treatment.

The Navy facilities at Erlu are used primarily for testing protective hull coatings for starships and grav vehicles against the insidious Erluian atmosphere.

One of the best preserved Ancient sites in the entire Imperium is found in this subsector on the world Antiquity. Antiquity has a fascinating museum displaying many wondrous and mystifying artifacts—many are still in working condition.

Name	*Location*	*UPP*		*Bases*	*Remarks*	
Shinku	0101	E879102	8		NonInd.	G
Kiran	0102	A354856	F	N		G
Aga Sugek	0103	A9B8356	B		NonInd.	G
Khikhuushir	0105	D676534	4		Agricultural. NonInd.	G
Ka Eto	0109	B615345	D	N	NonInd. Ice-Capped.	G
Erlu	0203	B7C0626	8	N	NonInd. Desert world.	G
Lobok	0208	C582876	9		Rich.	G
Jubal	0301	X300497	2		NonInd. Vacuum world.	R G
Muugagen	0302	D453465	9		NonInd. Poor. Owned by Kiran.	G
Yubitty	0303	C96A987	7		Water world.	G
Daban	0401	C514858	8		Ice-Capped.	G
Ian	0406	A5A88BE	C		Subsector Capital.	G
Irasumshu	0407	E554A74	6			G
Linix' cha	0501	E322578	8		NonInd. Poor.	G
Beta Regilis	0502	D543567	3	S	NonInd. Poor. Owned by Kumorie.	G
Kumorie	0503	B331758	C	S	NonAg. Poor.	G
Raiga	0506	X664532	3		Agricultural. NonInd.	R G
Ikhur	0601	B756532	B		Agricultural. NonInd.	G
Dywoslk	0604	C247547	A		Agricultural. NonInd.	G
Vom	0607	C223578	9	S	NonInd. Poor.	G
Teras	0704	B438247	B	N	NonInd.	
Lysio	0805	B494546	9	S	Agricultural. NonInd.	G
Antiquity	0806	A223420	C	N	NonInd. Poor. Ancient Site.	G

The Ian subsector contains 23 worlds with a total population of 95.380 billion. The highest population is 80.2 billion at Irasumshu; the highest tech level is F at Kiran. All worlds are members of the Imperium.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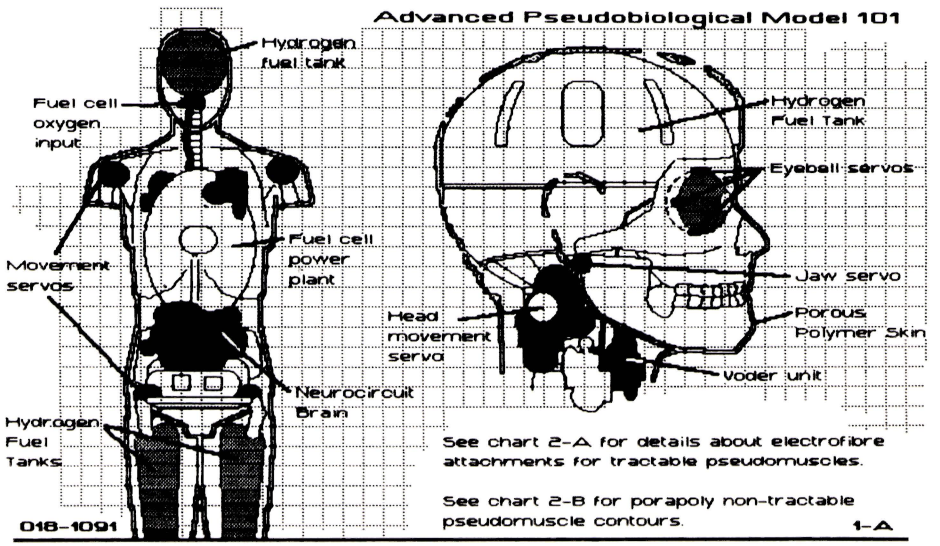
Robot Design Revisited, Part 3

–Joe D. Fugate Sr.



Parts 1 and 2 of Robot Design Revisited have described the new updated robot design system. Basically, the new system is a recast of the original robot design system published in *The Best of the Journal #1* . We have added new detail and also made it compatible with *Striker*. Our goal is not to replace the original system but to provide an updated, expanded alternative that is still consistent with the original.

In this final part we discuss some background material for using your robot designs in a Traveller game. First, let's look at an important historical event that helped shape the Third Imperium's current attitudes about robots.

THE SHUDUSHAM CONCORDS

A tragic attack against the Sylean Federation occurred in -112 in the Core subsector. A terrorist group rigged a courier robot to self-destruct, and managed to sneak it aboard a 90,000-ton Sylean battleship. The starship was on a goodwill mission in orbit around the world Fornol (Core, 1715) when the robot's hydrogen/oxygen fuel-cell exploded. Fornol's Premier, two ambassadors, and the Sylean Vice-Minister were killed, along with a host of ship's officers and crewmen. The repercussions from this event were so far reaching that the Sylean Federation was nearly thrown into a civil war.

This disaster prompted twelve worlds of the Sylean Federation to meet on the neutral world of Shudusham to draft an agreement dealing with the problem of weaponry carried by robots. After much deliberation, all twelve worlds finally signed the completed Shudusham Concords in -110. A hardcopy is on display in the Museum of Sylean History on Capital.

The Concords have no legal force in the Third Imperium, but they have served as a model for many hi-tech worlds' documents to govern the manufacture and use of robots.

The Concords contain seven articles:

Article 1: Gives a general explanation of the document, overall guidelines for robot construction, when and where robots should be used, and the rights of robot owners. The robot's owner is responsible for all actions the robot may perform, whether direct or indirect. Reliability is thus identified as a key issue, as is motivation for a robot with a weapon or used as a weapon.

Article 2: Describes detailed programming guidelines for general functions.

Article 3: Covers detailed manufacturing standards to insure reliability and provide for the safety of owners and the general public.

Article 4: Gives guidelines for when and where weapons are allowed and prohibited.

Article 5: Describes specific programming logic for weapon control and usage. Most strongly worded of all the articles.

Article 6: Describes detailed manufacturing standards to insure weapon reliability, when weapon installation is allowed.

Article 7: Provides for a new agency whose sole responsibility is to enforce the articles of the Concords.

Forty-three amendments were added over the active life of the Concords, dealing with technological changes, minor logic enhancements, and additional enforcement procedures. The 37th amendment is well-known; it states that no pseudo-biological robot may attempt to pass itself off as a living being.

The Shudusham Concords proved to be effective. An entire interstellar industry grew out of the need for sensory devices to aid in enforcement of the Concords on the twelve member worlds. The Concords lost their legal force when Cleon declared himself emperor of the Third Imperium.

ROBOTS IN THE THIRD IMPERIUM

Most worlds of tech level 12 or greater use robots to augment or even replace biological beings in uncreative, menial, or hazardous tasks that require little intelligence. The technological challenge is to build a cheap, reliable robot able to completely replace a being with intelligence. Relatively mindless robotic machines and appliances appear about tech level 8, and reliable speech recognition occurs at tech level 10. The reliablilty of primitive (non-creative) artificial intelligence often follows at tech 11, making the way for widespread introduction of primitive artificially intelligent robots at tech 12.

Some human-populated worlds harbor an anti-robotic bias, even though robots are technologically feasible there. On such worlds, items advertised as "Human-Made" often bring a premium price. A famous example of this philosophy is the popular quasi-religious *Society for the Sovereignty of Man over Machine* (SSMM) in the Solomani Confederation.

Many worlds have used the pre-Imperial Shudusham Concords as a model for their own laws to keep abuses with robots in check. Most worlds declare an owner to be responsible for the actions of his robot, even if the owner did not directly order the action. For example, if an owner orders his robot to protect his home, and in so doing the robot kills someone approaching the home, the owner can be charged with accidental murder.

Pseudo-biological robots are rare in the Third Imperium. Mid-tech level 15 is the first tech level at which a convincing pseudo-biological robot can be constructed. The majority of the worlds in the Imperium are below tech 15 in local manufacturing capability. Besides this, pseudo-biological robots are not particularly cost effective in design (Aybee cost over 6 million credits to construct). Pseudo-bio robots also tend to be more fragile and less reliable than traditional robots.

Another kind of bias against pseudo-biological robots is often encountered. Many people, even from high-tech worlds, are unsure of how to react to a human that turns out to be a machine. In fact, few researchers spend their time trying to re-invent man in machine form. Much more energy is spent on pursuits that obviously help humaniti, such as prosthetics.

ROBOTS IN A TRAVELLER GAME

Robots lend a nice high-tech feel to a **Traveller** game. Their likely presence on tech level 12+ worlds helps set apart the high-tech worlds in the players' minds. But if players engage in more than superficial contact with robots in the course of an adventure, additional rules are needed to effectively intregrate robots into the game.

Primitive Artificial Intelligence Effects

Primitive artificially intelligent robots first come into widespread use by tech level 12. (True artificial intelligence is not achieved until tech 17.) A robot with primitive artificial intelligence has a *self-actuation* fundamental logic circuit. Such a robot can come to obvious logical conclusions, but it is not truly creative. A thorough review of all the logical alternatives can sometimes *seem* like creative thinking, however. A TL17 robot (non-existent in the Third Imperium) with truly creative logic circuits can come to some astounding conclusions. Such robots are subject to whims, hunches, and moments of insight, just as are biological beings.

Apparent UPP for Pseudo-biological Robots

Pseudo-biological robots can have an apparent UPP, as follows:

- *Strength:* use the combined effect of all appendages (see the tables in part 1) plus the URP size.
  For example, Aybee has two light work arms, each with a strength entry of 5, giving a subtotal of 10. Adding Aybee's URP size of 5 gives a final strength characteristic of 15 (F).
- *Dexterity:* take the base dexterity from the locomotion transmission (again, see the tables in part 1), add the combined dexterity effect of all appendages, and add the dexterity plus for the fundamental logic program (see table). This is the same as the dexterity from the robot's URP (Universal Robot Profile).
  Looking at Aybee, we find that his locomotion transmission of legs gives us a base dexterity of 7. Adding 2 for each light work arm gives a subtotal of 11, and adding another 2 for the fundamental logic program of self-actuation gives a final dexterity characteristic of 13 (D).
  Editor's Note: The base dexterity for legs was mistakenly printed as 8 in the table in Issue 1. It should be 7 instead.
- *Endurance:* this is subjectively determined by the designer, and indicates the apparent physical build and stamina of the robot; it should be in the high end of the possible endurance range for the species. However, robots with emotion simulation can be programmed to portray *any* apparent endurance convincingly. In reality, the robot's true endurance is limited only by his power plant and fuel supply.
- *Intelligence:* use the intelligence straight from the URP.
- *Education:* when the robot is first constructed, divide the number of storage units by 10 to get its initial education level.

Increasing the robot's education beyond its initial level requires a UTP roll of: DIFFICULT, no skill,int (of robot), REPEATABLE, 2 months.

The maximum possible education is the number of units of storage. Thus Aybee's original education when constructed was 3. Over the 10 years since his construction, it has grown to 7. His maximum potential is an education of 30.

- *Social Standing:* Generally, the owner's social standing minus 1. If the robot is known to actually be a robot, its social standing is zero.

Chance of Misunderstanding Commands

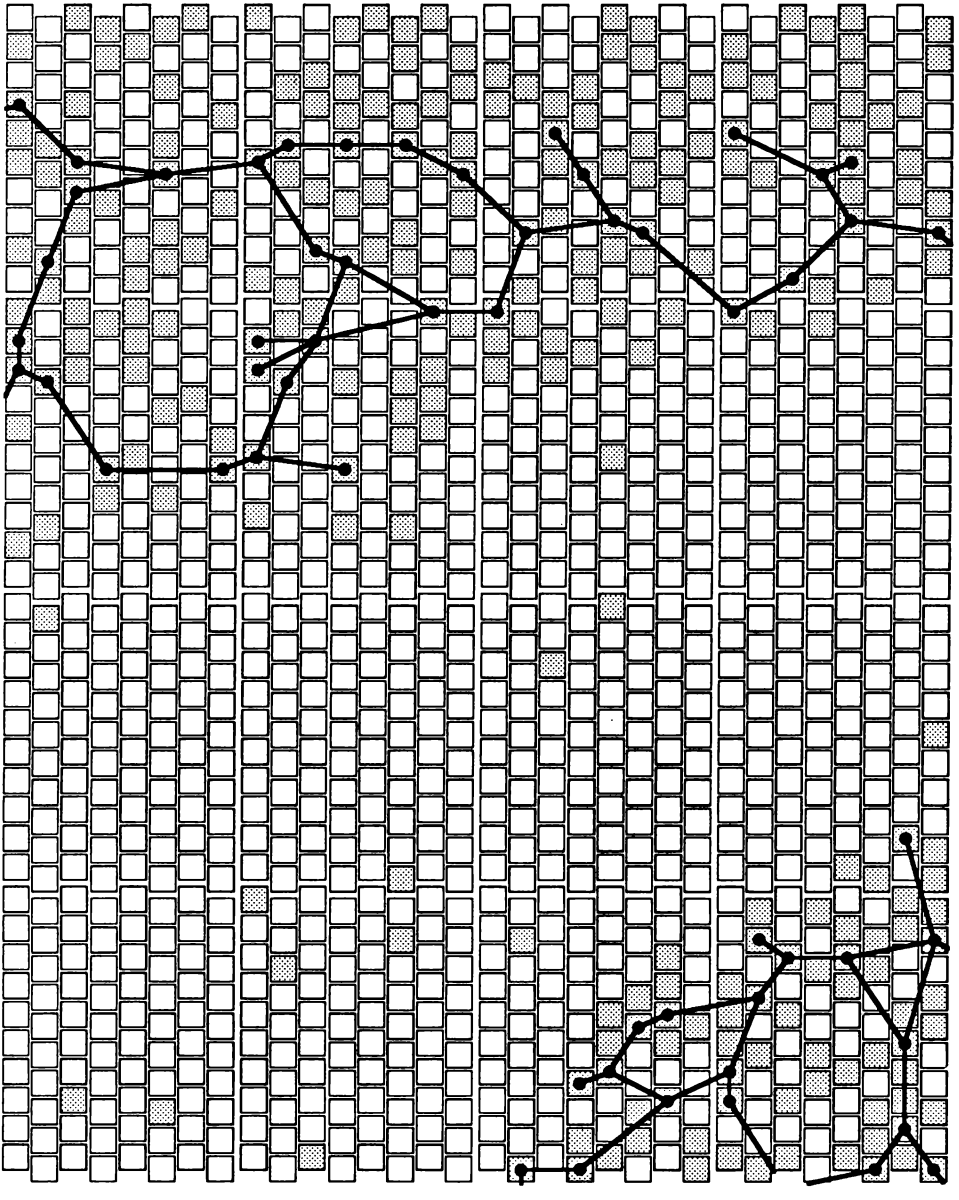
A robot will not always understand the commands given to it. To simulate this in a game, use a UTP (rolled secretly) for the robot to correctly interpret the command. Within the restrictions of the robot's fundamental command program, set the specific UTP difficulty based on the complexity of the command the player gives. Use the player's computer skill as the primary skill and the *robot's* intelligence as the primary characteristic.

This concludes the *Robot* series. We hope you enjoy it as much as we have enjoyed presenting it.

Note: The Universal Robot Profile for Aybee is.:

AB-101 56123-22-43227-DC Cr 6,660,240 318 kg Fuel=93 TL=15
2 legs
head(10%), 2 lt work arms
2 eyes(+1 lt intens), 2 ears, voder, touch, pwr interface,
brain interface, lt laser welder, holographer, elec circuit protect
Medic-1
General Language
General Vehicle
Valet
General weapon handling (laser welder)
Fire-fighting/rescue
Emotion Simulation

Xboat Routes of the Corridor Sector



Khouth	Khukish	Lemish	The Narrows
Ian	Strand	Naadi	Uanti
Shush	The Empty Void	Atu'l	Kivu
Two Worlds	Ashish-inipar	Sinta	Sashra-kusha

Corridor: Subsector Key

The Corridor Sector

LIBRARY DATA OF THE SECTOR –Nancy Parker and Robert Parker

Gagh Veth/Khukish (1603 X-556423-1): Red Zone. The thirty-three thousand Vargr of this planet are evenly divided among three high-charisma leaders: Saegh Urr Fagnu, Vaefors Zeghz, and Gzonging Gzeth. The resulting civil war has reduced local technology to the bronze age, tech level 1. All travellers are advised to avoid this world.

Ishirdu/Two Worlds (0338 X-776301-0): Red Zone. The taint of radioactive gases in the atmosphere of Ishirdu led to the evolution of the psionically gifted Irdu, who live in widely scattered woodland homes and supply their needs by telekinetic manipulations. The population of two thousand is optimum to them, and they maintain it carefully. Their psionic skills shocked the Scouts of the Rydel Expeditions, and the Navy interdicted the world, despite the non-agressive character of the Irdu.

Kanorb/Sashrakusha (2733 C-473976-C): Kanorb has a long history of settlement, and, unfortunately, an equally long history of fractious politics. Kanorb was a stronghold of Vilani noble houses in the First Imperium, and it withdrew from Interstellar commerce early in the Rule of Man period. When the Solomani attempted to reintegrate Kanorb by force, the population put up fierce resistance. The Solomani Navy was so overtaxed by the vastness of the Second Imperium that they were never able to muster enough force to fight a conclusive battle with Kanorb. After the Rule of Man fell, several of the Vilani Lords began quarelling with each other, not having a common cause to unite them. The world disintegrated into dozens of squabbling nations during the Long Night.

The Third Imperium first re-established trade relations with the nation Eshlepur, on the northern continent. Now, most of the major powers carry on interstellar trade, acting independently under sometimes contradictory agreements. Smaller nations group themselves into spheres of influence around superpowers possessing starports. Languages have diverged sharply from the original Vilani; some fifty dialects are now spoken on the planet.

Kikasad/Sinta (2334 C-76A003-6): This waterworld is a hunting preserve, boasting some of the most spectacular game fish in the Imperium. The law level indicates the weapons allowable for hunting. Valiant hunters sometimes attempt an underwater hunt; the fish greatly enjoy these tidbits.

Kidagir/The Narrows (2503 X-242324-5): Red Zone. This border planet changed hands several times recently; the Vargr corsairs who occupy the planet now hold the tiny human population in slavery. A recent expedition to aid the enslaved humans has failed to return. Many Vargr, peaceably inclined toward the Imperium, disavow Kidagir's recent crimes and avoid the planet.

Lasher/The Empty Void (1430 B-8C2100-8): The star Lasher is a subsector all to itself. The Navy discovered extensive deposits of lanthanum (a vital element in the construction of jump drives) on an inner planet of the system; the planet's insidious atmosphere makes the mines difficult to work, forcing cumbersome protective gear and short work sessions. The entire population of 600 lives in an orbital rotating torus constructed by the Navy.

Plunge/The Narrows (2505 B-2409CC-E): The name Plunge was given not in honor of this world's oceans (it has none), but because it stands at the head of the great Ushamla Main that spreads commerce coreward of the Great Reft. Many of the planet's eight billion people live in tunnels hollowed into the planet's crust. Trade has brought great wealth to Plunge, and the biggest businessmen are the leaders of the government. Their powers are dictatorial, but they have the respect of their underlings.

Raiga/Ian (0516 X-664532-3): Red Zone. When first colonized from Ian in the late 100's, Raiga had a thin tainted atmosphere. Volcanoes were broken open to raise the atmosphere density and bacteria were sown to remove the taint from the air. However, an unforeseen burst of radiation from Raiga's primary caused some of the bacteria to mutate into a deadly strain. While the original taint had largely been removed, the mutated bacteria proved fatal to most human inhabitants. A few managed to develop an immunity to the bacteria—these "immunes" have multiplied to become a sizable population, but the planet is quarantined to non-natives. Nor can the natives leave, since they are carriers of the deadly bacteria *Lucellia Raigae.*

Rill/Atu'l (1923 E-889662-4): This warm, moist world supports estates of wealthy Imperials as well as a sizeable colony of chirpers (degenerate droyne). The tech level listed refers to the Imperial estates. Its isolated location (jump-5 is required to reach Rill) means only official vessels ever call there.

Riilam, Kirshamii: In 1090, partially in reaction to the communication lag during the Fourth Frontier War, Senior Scout Kirshamii Riilam mounted a daring one-ship expedition to test the feasibility of a supply station route across the Great Reft.

Although nominally a Scout venture, substantial backing and a Seeker Class ship *Reftbreaker* were provided by General Products, LIC. By removing all non-essentials, the cargo space was expanded to provide a second full fuel tank, allowing *Reftbreaker* to make the largest jump distance of 8 parsecs in two successive jump-4 jumps. After refueling at a gas giant in the Yoma/Vast Heavens system (Deneb 0331), the expedition returned to Corridor by the same route.

Upon their return they were knighted by Strephon, and Riilam received a baronial fiefdom on Jafla/Sinta (Corridor 1840). Because of the success of this expedition, Strephon's popularity increased considerably. Serious consideration is being given to the idea of planting several ice asteroids mid-rift as a permanent refueling station.

Rydel Expeditions: In 153 and again in 160, expeditions led by Admiral Inesh Rydel tried to locate a usable jump route across the Great Reft from Corridor (rimward) to Deneb. The first expedition originated from Sinta (Corridor 2037) and eventually arrived by various routes to Ashishinipar (Corridor 0931). Nearly a year was spent trying to find a way to go further but to no avail. A second attempt, made by a different route, ended on Ishirdu (Corridor 0338). This proved to be closer, but not close enough to Yoma/Vast Heavens (Deneb 3031), the closest possible world in this area of the rift. (see also Riilam, Kirshamii.)

Shurgi Main: The Shurgi Main is a branch of the Vland Main, and was settled early in the First Imperium. The Corridor Sector was first entered at the world Sharkhagu (Corridor 3235) by ships of the Sharurshid Merchant Company out of Sakin (Vland 0135). Sharkhagu, only 1 jump away, strongly resembled Sakin and the colony there has maintained close relations with the mother planet throughout its history; indeed, it never requested independence throughout the Long Night, and remains a Sakin colony to this day.

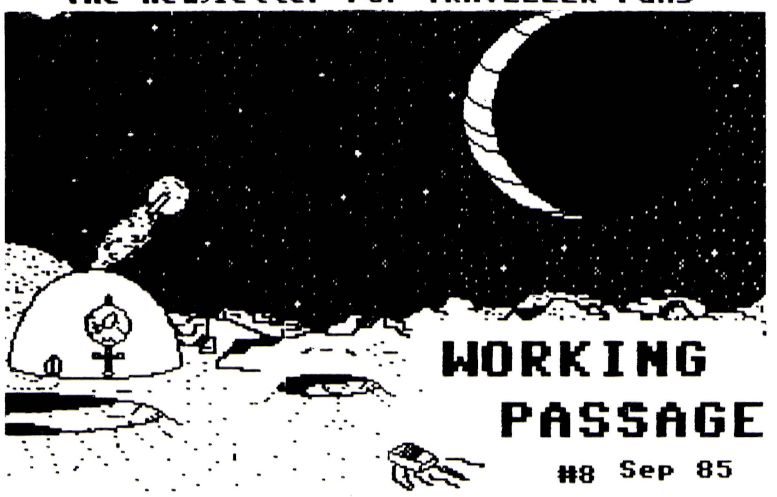
At Cafad (Corridor 3135), a low-tech human population was discovered. The Vilani efforts to integrate the Cafad humans into their Grand Imperium progressed slowly. The world relapsed into barbarism at the onset of the Long

Night. After centuries of contact with the Third Imperium, Cafad has only now started to re-embrace technology.

Igudi (Corridor 2836) discarded most technology during the Long Night. Its climate is quite hospitable to humans and the inhabitants grew to prefer an essentially pastoral existance. Certain native animals have been domesticated for food and wool. The populace has shown very little inclination to technological advancement since the original contact by the Third Imperium in its first century. Interstellar merchants occasionally visit the world to trade with the locals.

Palama (Corridor 3240) was only recently colonized because its resources were not detected until the Tech Level 15 density survey. Its dense tainted atmosphere made it unattractive to ordinary colonists.

The Shurgi Main is commercially and psychologically part of the central Imperium.



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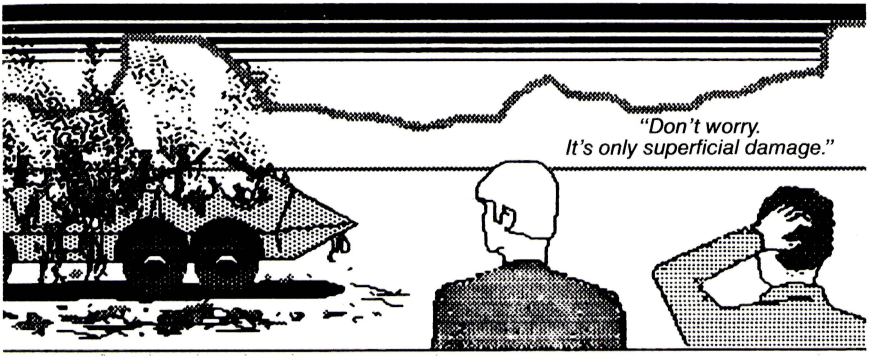
Damage and Repair

THE GAMING DIGEST -Joe D. Fugate Sr.



The ATV just ran over your Laser Carbine—now what do you do? Later, the ATV is caught in a rockslide. How badly damaged is it? Does it still run? What will it take to fix it? Questions like these crop up in many **Traveller** adventures and plague many referees.

Here's a simple method to handle repair and damage. It meshes easily with the Universal Task Profile (UTP), it's playable, and it's realistic. Let's see how it works.

DAMAGE LEVELS

Using **Striker** as a guide, we arrive at four damage levels that fit the four UTP task levels. The damage levels (superficial, minor, major, and destroyed) are summarized in the following table:

Dmg Level	*Operable?*	*Failure Result*	*Accident Result*	*Shop Repairs Difficulty*	*Field Repairs Difficulty*
Superficial	Yes	—	Minor dmg	SIMPLE	ROUTINE, permanent
Minor	No	—	Major dmg	ROUTINE	DIFFICULT, semi-permanent
Major	No	Major dmg	Destroyed	DIFFICULT	FORMIDABLE, temporary
Destroyed	No	N/A	N/A	FORMIDABLE	IMPOSSIBLE

Failure result: indicates what happens if you fail a task involving the vehicle or device, after a field repair.

Accident result: indicates what happens if an accident (a roll of 2-) occurs involving the vehicle or device, after a field repair.

Shop repairs difficulty: indicates the difficulty level of the repair task when repairing the vehicle or device in a facility designed to handle such a task.

Field repairs difficulty: indicates the difficulty level of the repair task when repairing the vehicle or device away from appropriate facilities, such as in the wilderness, wilds, or outback. Even civilized areas may necessitate "field" repair conditions if the local tech level is vastly lower (say a difference of 4 or more) than that of the vehicle or device. This column also tells how long field repairs will last before breaking down again (see *Failure result* and *Accident result*). Also, lack of materials or spare parts can affect repair difficulty, as can lack of tools.

MAKING REPAIRS

To fix any damage that has occurred, a player must succeed at two tasks:

- Diagnose the problem
- Effect repairs

Diagnosis is always a ROUTINE task, no matter what the damage level is. If

the first attempt fails, diagnosis is REPEATABLE. Typically, diagnosis is not difficult, but it sometimes drags out, and it can be very frustrating just to *locate* the problem. The UTP rules for repeatablity covers all the bases—if the initial diagnosis fails, the diagnosis task becomes more difficult unless the character makes a successful dedication roll. JOT helps here, as usual.

Each time damage deteriorates to a worse level, the character gets a fresh try at the diagnosis task. In effect, the new level of damage causes some subtle symptoms to become more pronounced, so the problem may now be obvious.

Characters cannot perform field repairs until they have successfully diagnosed the problem. They can, however, perform shop repairs without successfully diagnosing the problem at an additional increase to the originally rolled repair cost of 1 to 6 times (roll 1D). While they may not be able to locate the problem, they can replace the entire sub-assembly that is causing the problem.

Let's say the ATV in the rockslide has only SUPERFICIAL damage. We want to repair it to remove the worry of it ever deteriorating to minor damage, so we attempt a diagnosis task and fail. We fail at the dedication for another diagnosis attempt, so we leave the damage as is. Later we get a modified roll of 2 in a task attempt with the ATV while crossing a difficult section of terrain, giving us an accident. *Oh, no!* Now our ATV has deteriorated to MINOR damage and doesn't run.

We roll again to diagnose the problem (we get a fresh attempt, since the damage just deteriorated from SUPERFICIAL to MINOR), and again fail. We try the dedication roll for the diagnosis task, and that also *fails.* We are in the field, so we're stuck! As far as we're concerned, our ATV is DESTROYED: it won't run and we don't know why. And it all started with some superficial damage we couldn't diagnose.

Such a turn of events happens all too often in real life, and with this system it can also happen in an adventure. Such an event may turn out to be one of the highlights that the entire group will recall: "That jinxed ATV the so-and-so sold us—and it's still there in the desert on Efate for all we know..."

Once the characters have successfully diagnosed the problem, the following table gives the necessary information for making repairs:

Dmg level	*shop repair task*	*shop repair cost (field repairs are "free")*
SUPERFICIAL	SIMPLE	1 - 6% of new price (use 1D)
MINOR	ROUTINE	1 - 36% of new price (use 1Dx1D)
MAJOR	DIFFICULT	10 - 60% of new price (use 2Dx5)
DESTROYED	FORMIDABLE	20 -720% of new price (use 2Dx2Dx5)

If in the field: raise task difficulty one level.
If no parts/materials: raise task difficulty one level.
If no tools: raise task difficulty one level.

All of the above are cumulative. For example, repairing superficial damage in the field without materials and without tools is a FORMIDABLE task.

Field repairs are "free" insofar as the characters effect the repairs using materials or spare parts already on hand. But supply is not infinite, materials and spare parts must be replaced at some point or the task difficulty for repairs should be raised one level.

We have yet to discuss how to determine the damage level when an accident occurs. We'll talk about accidents next time. See you then.

Sensory Devices: Densitometers

TECH BRIEFS –Robert Parker

One of the most important sensory packages used by the Scout Service's planetography teams is the remote densitometer, popularly called a "mass detector". While a true mass detector merely indicates the presence or absence of discrete bodies above a predetermined size, the densitometer (also an outgrowth of gravitic technology) does much more. It uses the object's natural gravity to directly measure its *density* or mass per unit volume.

The densitometer records gravitational scan data in a three-dimensional matrix. The data is then processed by a computer to provide a 3D *density map* of the scanned object or area. Within certain limitations, an object's elemental makeup can then be deduced from the densitometer's scan data.

Densitometers come in three basic sizes. The smallest and most recently developed are the hand densitometers. While still large enough to need a shoulder case, they are ideal for close-up work, since they can resolve density details down to about 1 cm. They are not large enough to hold a computer and a complete 3D holographic display, but they do provide 2D perspective views.

The larger vehicle-portable and shipboard models can provide full holographic displays of data, as well as hardcopied statistical output. Also, these large models have greater range and penetration.

Densitometers have a multitude of uses. Planetography teams can learn much about a planet without ever landing. The basic structure and major tectonic plates can be located and mapped accurately from orbit. Faults and volcanos can be stress mapped before landing in a potentially hazardous location. Major ore deposits can be located from orbit. All of this allows a much more efficient use of a survey team's time, both in orbit and dirtside.

Miners use these instruments both on the ground and in planetoid belts to locate larger and richer deposits of ore, to get a better return for time and money invested.

Modern starship densitometers can locate gas giants in stellar systems up to two parsecs away. The advantages of this are obvious.

As handy as these instruments are, they are not without limitations. The information about gas giants will be out of date (approximately seven years at extreme range). Densitometers do not have infinite penetration. The resolution is limited to 0.01 per cent of the area scanned, with 1 cm the absolute limit.

Densitometer readings are meaningless if made in a region of artificial gravity. Starship densitometers are gravity shielded, which adds appreciably to their size and price. Vehicle-portable and handheld densitometers are not gravity shielded.

Planetographers are particularly sensitive about gravitic devices being operated in their scan area. Operating a gravitic device near a planetographer doing a density scan may be physically dangerous, once the planetographer has determined who is operating the source of the gravitic distortion. (The Imperial Surgeon General warns that such activity may be hazardous to your health.)

A high density object considerably smaller than densitometer resolution can occasionally "up the average" enough that it can still be located.

Densitometer Specifications

A densitometer's important attributes are range, resolution, and penetration. *Range* is the distance from which a scan can be made, and varies with tech level. *Penetration* is the depth to which reliable density differentiation is possible, and also varies with tech level. *Resolution* is relatively constant from tech level to tech level and is determined from scan width. Scan width is 1% of the distance from the target. Resolution is 1% of the scan width. There is a practical minimum resolution: 1 cm for handheld, 10 cm for vehicle-portable, and 1 meter for starships.

Tech Level 13+ densitometers record scan data (using a 3-D database) on a holographic crystal and a holographic density map can be played back if the densitometer is connected to a computer with holographic display capabilities. Akidda's holocrystal recorder does not have the proper computer design for playing back densitometer scans. Any starship does. Handheld densitometers provide a flat perspective density map for immediate viewing. Vehicle-portable densitometers have a 3D holo display computer built in.

Size	*TL*	*WT*	*Price*	*Range*	*Penetration*
Starship	10	5 tons	1 MCr	100 AU	surface
	11	4 tons	1 MCr	1000 AU	1 meter
	12	3 tons	1 MCr	10,000 AU	5 meters
	13	2 tons	1 MCr	1 light year	50 meters
	14	1.5 tons	1 MCr	1 parsec	250 meters
	15	1 ton	1 MCr	2 parsecs	1 km
Vehicle Portable	12	110 kg	55,000 Cr	5 km	5 meters
	13	75 kg	70,000 Cr	20 km	20 meters
	14	40 kg	85,000 Cr	50 km	50 meters
	15	25 kg	100,000 Cr	100km	100 meters
Handheld	14	7 kg	15,000 Cr	2 km	2 meters
	15	2 kg	25,000 Cr	10km	10 meters

For example, suppose you are in a spaceship one million km away from a size-6 world. At this range, the densitometer scan width is one per cent of the distance, or 10,000 km. Maximum resolution is one per cent of the scan width, or 100 km.

If you move the ship to a close orbit of 100 km from the world's surface, the scan width will be 1 km, and the maximum resolution will be 10 meters.

At the farther distance, the whole planet could be scanned at one time, but resolution would lack precision. From the close orbit, the accuracy of resolution increases, but to scan the entire planet surface would take years.

Coming in the Next Issue. . .

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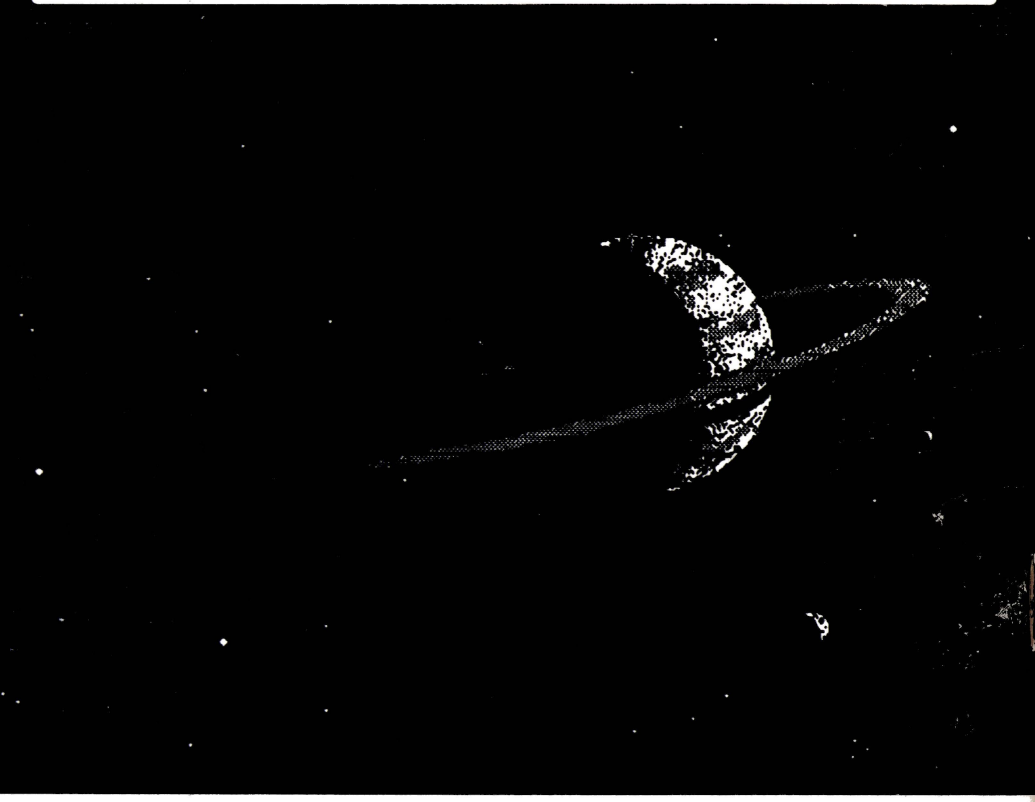
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